

THE CREATIVE IMAGINATION
IN
JAMES REANEY'S LISTEN TO THE WIND

THE BROKEN WINDOWPANE: A STUDY
IN THE
CREATIVE IMAGINATION IN JAMES REANEY'S
LISTEN TO THE WIND

by

KATHLEEN JANE BIRCH, R.N., B.A.

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

McMaster University

September 1973

c Kathleen Jane Birch 1973

MASTER OF ARTS (1973)
(English)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: The Broken Windowpane: A Study in the Creative Imagination
in James Reaney's Listen to the Wind

AUTHOR: Kathleen Jane Birch, R.N. (Atkinson School of Nursing),
B.A. (University of Waterloo)

SUPERVISOR: Professor A.A. Lee

NUMBER OF PAGES: iv, 143

SCOPE AND CONTENTS: The thesis is a critical reading of James Reaney's play Listen to the Wind. The play is examined in the light of Reaney's earlier works, both poetic and dramatic. Source material is taken into account and auditory and visual patterns of imagery are explicated in an attempt to demonstrate the playwright's primary concern, the involvement of his audience actively, in the workings of the creative imagination.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. John Ferns for his patience and interest and for allowing me to interrupt his work sporadically and without announcement, at some points almost daily. To Professor Lee I cannot but say thank-you again and again, for the loan of valuable reviews and articles, for continued enthusiasm and encouragement, and for allowing me to read and write.

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: THE LANGUAGE OF <u>LISTEN TO THE WIND</u>	14
CHAPTER TWO: LISTENING TO THE WIND	46
CHAPTER THREE: THE PATTERN OF <u>LISTEN TO THE WIND</u>	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	139

INTRODUCTION

James Reaney describes his Listen to the Wind as "the bare stage, just words and you approach"¹ to theatre. But it is not quite that simple, for what allows this and his later works to appear "so odd that nobody seemed willing to chance it"² is his complete grasp of the tradition of theatre as it can be juxtaposed with contemporary concerns both philosophically and imaginatively. He can, for instance, employ a traditional three act structure but superimpose upon that what would seem to be a rather unwieldy 49 scenes. He uses the very traditional "play within a play" technique, not in an effort to unravel some difficulties in plot or character development, but rather to be the play and moreover to become dramatic illustrations of contemporary concerns with time, identity and even the creative imagination. The final concern is, however, perhaps the primary issue for Reaney, the theatre and his play.

In writing about the imaginative experience of a writer, Northrop Frye states: "A writer's desire to write can only have come from previous experience of literature, and he'll start by imitating whatever he's read, . . . After working in this convention for a while, his own distinctive sense of form will develop out of his knowledge

of literary technique."³ The following experience led James Reaney towards the kind of imaginative and theatrical experience which he presents to us in Listen to the Wind:

'I watched the kids playing around our verandah. On a primitive skateboard they roll Malcolm, aged three, about and say -- "You're a turkey. Now we'll put you in the oven."⁴ To the socially disciplined adult, this kind of behaviour does indeed seem to be pure imagination, for we all know we are not turkeys and neither can we become turkeys (at least not at this point in time . . .I think). But the children could not have imagined the situation if they had never seen a turkey go into an oven. Moreover, their interpretation of the turkey being placed in the oven includes a skateboard. Here we have "previous experience" and "distinctive sense of form".

Now, what does all this have to do with Listen to the Wind? Well, quite a lot, I think, for if we are going to understand this dramatic construct, we must first understand the principles upon which the dramatist is constructing his work. Reaney, again in the 1966 production notes, states:

Five years ago I saw the Peking National Opera perform a centuries old play, At the Fairy Mountain Bridge. The orchestra sat on stage. Gestures and mime took the place of props and sets. I remember a fabulous boat just made by two actors pretending. Art is made by subtracting from reality and letting the viewer imagine or "dream it out" (as Owen is told to in the play).

As the children observed above were creating using basic principles of artistic invention, so too do the members of the Peking chorus. But notice that Reaney takes these principles one step further or, perhaps more accurately, imposes his peculiar sense of form on the convention. First, he is interested in the viewer. The audience seems to him to be a possible participatory member of the production. It is not "Two actors pretended to make a boat", but rather "I remember a fabulous boat . . .". He, as one particular member of the audience was, with some assistance, able to envisage almost to reality a "fabulous boat".

Secondly, his view is that "Art is made by subtracting from reality". Where does "previous experience" fit in? How do subtracting and adding work together? At first glance, Frye's fairly lucid theory of the process of the creation of art seems to be at odds with an artist's own theory of that process. I think, probably, that the question is not one of subtracting at all. It is one of selectivity, like the question of what facts (if we are speaking of a novel or short story) are necessary or relevant in order to make the point desired or to reveal the character in the way in which the novelist wants the reader to see him. Shirley Faessler, in speaking of some of her short stories, explains it this way:

As a child I loved the brothers Yankev and Yudah; Henye, I detested. Where then does the compassion for her as a human being come from? What is the difference between the real person and the literary creation? All my characters are based on real people but somewhere along the line a transmuting occurs. I disliked the man who was Myer Layevsky, but he is not a dislikable figure in the story. Neither, I think, is Henye. What process occurs? I can't answer that.⁵

The answer is, I think, quite clear. The literary artist is as selective in her portrait as is the painter. Gōya's The Family of Charles IV scandalized the world in its honest reality. But the satirized saw nothing of this in it. Indeed, the process may be intuitive or unconscious but it does betray the artist. The novelist must make decisions about what you the reader do not want to know or rather what you do want to know. In any case he selects his material. What Reaney is then creating is his very "distinctive sense of form" in theatre. He chooses not to reveal the guilt of the king by using a play within a play à la Hamlet but rather to reveal the play in the play within a play. Not only does his chorus provide "props, sound effects, mime, anything the boy who lies reading on the bed wants when he tries to dream 'it' out" (Stage Directions, Scene 1, p. 13), but physically it also provides an audience for the play within the play. Necessarily, then, the real audience identifies with it and indeed is taught how to imagine, for the chorus's use of imaginative props (a wheel is a carriage), mime, etc., insists upon the real audience's

participation. The chorus in Listen to the Wind underlines the imaginative development in the play. Instead of the playwright making the decisions for the audience, the audience must make the decisions for itself. So, we are then in complete accord with Northrop Frye after all. James Reaney is working in the theatrical convention. But it is his innovative theatrical convention.

About his work, James Reaney comments: "It can probably best be summed up in three words: What I've tried to do and what I keep trying to do is Listen to the Wind, see Colours in the Dark."⁶ His metaphor for the action of the creative imagination is listening to the wind. Jay Macpherson puts it this way: "'Listening to the wind' is the play's image for openness to imagination: the willingness to listen is that willed passiveness in which the Spirit can move."⁷ The chorus directs the audience at the beginning and the end of Scene 2 to "Listen to the Wind". So, let us examine the winds in the play, what they are, what force they propel within the work and how they are related to listening. In other words let us attempt to understand Reaney's conception of the creative imagination and its power as it is presented to us here.

Before the chorus takes an active role in calling forth the winds, the imaginative forces that move the play forward, we are presented with the four children who will

control the action of the play, who will "dream it out". There are several reasons for this, the most obvious being that these are the central characters in the play and we must be introduced. This, of course, is following the classical tradition in which the chorus does not appear until the problem of the play has been introduced, by either major or minor characters. And, indeed, the problem of this play here is being introduced.

We are confronted with four children together for one of those long, hot, boring summer holidays we have all experienced. In order to amuse themselves, they decide to "spend the whole summer here putting on plays." (Scene 1, p. 13) At this point I think probably any member of the audience would be able to identify with the children and even their imaginations. How many of us have spent summer holidays "playing school" or "having a circus" or "being a shopkeeper selling lemonade" or even "putting on a play"? The point, too, is that just as the child Malcolm was a turkey we were teachers or monkeys or shopkeepers. Moreover, if we decided to put on a play, we didn't ever look for a play to put on, but rather we created one out of some comic book or story we were fond of even if it was Thornton Burgess's Prickly Porcky. Who can deny the irresistibility of a child's imagination? If a three year old child walks into the room, tells you that he is a fireman and points his

curtain-rod hose at you, you cannot resist pretending that you are good and wet. But remember, that childhood imagination is as sophisticated as the skilled creative artist's, if you remember how it fits into Northrop Frye's theory. The difficulty is, of course, that adults in facing the many realistic problems of living tend to discipline themselves out of that creative ability. Admittedly, part of our need as children to imagine was so that we could place ourselves into the world of the adult. We all knew we were going there and were practising how to deal with it. However, if an artist wants to rejuvenate that creative instinct in adults, it seems to me to be psychologically sound to try the simple process of identification as a starting point. Certainly, the chorus "dressed in their own casual summer clothes"⁸ repeatedly asking the audience to "Listen to the Wind" are going to be able to provide that kind of identification, especially when, as we have earlier mentioned, the audience is necessarily part of that chorus.

These are not the only reasons for the existence of this particular first scene. We are told that the play the children will produce will be based on "The Saga of Caresfoot Court", more accurately on Rider Haggard's first novel Dawn. Whether we can allocate that particular source to Reaney, that is, to the artist's "previous experience of

literature", or to Owen's experience is a tricky problem and its particular usage will be dealt with later. We can say, though, that it does follow nicely the previously discussed theory of the creative process in literature.

What really indicates that the imaginative process is going to be one of Reaney's key concerns in the play is freely demonstrated to the audience even before the curtain rises. The programme notes tell us that the play includes "poems by Charlotte and Emily Brontë". And, indeed, we have not only poems by the famous literary children, but we have in the first scene four children, three girls and a boy together in a rural setting spending a great deal of their time writing creatively. "Like the four Brontë children who survived childhood -- Branwell, Charlotte, Emily and Ann -- Reaney's boy and three girls are isolated, deprived of adequate parental love, and gifted with extraordinary powers of fancy."⁹ The validity of paralleling Owen, Harriet, Jenny and Ann with Branwell, Charlotte, Emily and Ann in any other than a general way is questionable. However the seeds of the energetic Branwell who had a taste for the gruesome, who could live a spirited childhood but not quite come to terms with adulthood¹⁰ are certainly present in the Owen who in the first scene portrays an amazingly energetic Tarzan, who admits to tipping the death straw slightly in deciding Angela's fate and who indeed

appears to have a very limited future before him. Similarly, Anne Brontë's poems tend to deal with "the separation of loved ones through imprisonment"¹¹ and it is Ann's suggestion that "6 people die in bed -- from broken hearts -- or poison -- or get betrayed -- that sort of thing." (Scene 1, p. 15) Yet it is probably the imaginative forces involved in the Brontë's childhood myths that are woven into the fabric of Reaney's play: Emily's malevolent and merciful winds, the passions of love and hate and the problems of generation and regeneration. Again it is more a matter of selectivity, of how James Reaney decides to use the intriguing imaginative and real worlds of the Brontës in his own form.

It is clear, however, in the words of the central imagining personality within the play, Owen, how one relates the source material used to the "real" situation of the play, i.e., Ontario in the 'thirties:

Yes. You know as I've been reading it -- here -- sometimes I feel I don't really live or die -- here -- in Ontario, but I lived a century ago -- in an old manorhouse in England -- with the rain beating down on the windows -- and the wind whistling around the eaves.

(Scene 1, p. 16)

Notice that we have a character who sometimes believes he is in a different time and place. He has become part of the created work before him, something like being a turkey or seeing a "fabulous boat". He is listening to the wind. Of

course there are other concerns within the passage: the juxtaposition of Victorian England with present Ontario time and place, an important imaginative step required of us the audience in understanding the work; we have been introduced to "life and death", an all important theme, as well as Nature, a "Canadian" theme; but we finally come to the whistling wind.

The action having been introduced, the chorus invokes the audience to "Listen to the Wind!" (Scene 2, p. 17). Indeed the whole work is framed by the chorus providing a kind of invocation (Scene 2: The Four Winds) and a benediction: "We wove a web in childhood" (Scene 49, p. 112). And invocation is not an unusual thing in poetry. Reaney himself invokes the "Muse of Satire"¹² at the beginning of his Suit of Nettles. The tradition of invoking a muse of poetry comes from the classical Greek and Roman poets. So, too, does an invocation by the chorus in a drama. The chorus of Huntsmen in Euripides' innovative Hippolytus at their first entrance makes a powerful invocation to Artemis:

Revered, revered, hallowed daughter of Zeus, hail
Artemis, hail maiden of Leto and Zeus, most
beautiful of maidens by far. You dwell in heaven
in your noble sire's hall, in the house of Zeus
bedecked with gold. Hail most beautiful, most
beautiful of maidens in Olympus, hail Artemis!¹³

The invocation to Artemis is fatal to Hippolytus. It is the essential factor in moving the drama forward. The conflict

that follows, indeed the central meaning in the play, is based upon Hippolytus' insistence in aligning himself with Artemis.

Reaney's invocation is slightly more complicated, for it is a two-folded one. It asks the audience to listen, to "dream it out" along with Owen; but it also asks the power of the wind for inspiration. The wind will capture the spirit of the imagination and will come to symbolize the forces which motivate the characters and their actions in the work. Artemis comes to symbolize the force which moves Hippolytus to tragedy.

FOOTNOTES INTRODUCTION

¹James Reaney, "Ten Years at Play", in William H. New, ed., Dramatists in Canada (Vancouver: U.B.C. Press, 1972), p. 27.

²"Ten Years at Play", p. 27.

³Northrop Frye, The Educated Imagination (Toronto: Hunter Rose, 1972), p. 14.

⁴James Reaney, Listen to the Wind (Vancouver: talonbooks, 1972), p. 117. This is from "Production Notes" 1966. Any further reference to the play is taken from this edition; it will be acknowledged in the text by scene and page numbers.

⁵Shirley Faessler, "The Poor Literatus", in John Metaclaf, ed., The Narrative Voice (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972), p. 66.

⁶James Reaney, "James Reaney", in Rosalie Murphy, ed., James Vinson, deputy ed., Contemporary Poets of the English Language, Preface by C. Day Lewis (London: St. James Press, 1970), p. 901.

⁷Jay Macpherson, "Listen to the Wind", in The Canadian Forum (September 1966). The article has been republished as the preface to the talonbooks edition of Listen to the Wind. I quote from the preface, p. 8.

⁸Alvin A. Lee, James Reaney (New York: Twayne, 1968), p. 149.

⁹Lee, James Reaney, p. 152.

¹⁰See Fannie Ratchford's The Brontë's Web of Childhood (New York: Russell and Russell, 1969) for background concerning all the Brontë children.

¹¹Ratchford, p. 258.

¹²James Reaney, A Suit of Nettles, in Poems,
ed. Germaine Warkentin (Toronto: New Press, 1972), p. 146.

¹³Euripides, Hippolytus, in Ten Plays by Euripides,
translated by Moses Hadas and John McLean (New York: Bantam,
1966), p. 68.

CHAPTER ONE

THE LANGUAGE OF LISTEN TO THE WIND

We have established that one of Reaney's primary concerns in this dramatic work is introducing to the audience the necessary tools for the imagination to function and hopefully the audience's action upon them. The language of literature is associative: "it uses figures of speech like the simile and the metaphor, to suggest an identity between the human mind and the world outside it, that identity being what the imagination is chiefly concerned with."¹ Reaney's dramatic construct depends upon similes and metaphors to reveal its meaning, but his images are not of the kind found in, say, Shakespeare's Othello:

Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves, that we are thus, or thus: our bodies are gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners, so that if we plant nettles, or sow lettuce, set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either to have it sterile with idleness, or manur'd with industry, why, the power, and corrigible authority of this, lies in our wills.²

This elaborate condemnation of a more romantic view of love and sexual intercourse as opposed to the medieval idea of procreation involves a complex combination of horticultural images, even to the extent of the pejorative "fig". It is so complex as to need unravelling by Renaissance horticulturists in order to ascertain its meaning; for hyssop and thyme

are considered to be aiders of growth to each other, the one being "hot", the other "cold".³ It is a similar situation for nettles and lettuce. Although in tone the meaning is clear, it is questionable as to whether or not the dramatist's elaborate "conceit" would ever be entirely evident to an audience at one performance. Notice too, that it is the "dramatist's conceit". The audience could be a passive recipient in the episode. Certainly an extremely heightened alertness is very necessary in even beginning to follow this kind of metaphorical complexity. This is where Reaney's image patterns differ. The image is visually evident rather than subtly integrated into lengthy dialogue, however brilliant. Rather than expecting his audience to be dramatic critics, or perhaps more accurately, poetic critics, he is demanding that they become to a very large extent dramatists themselves, that they freely associate.

The stage directions make clear the point. Props are not props. They are images. Scene 43 ends with the following final Stage Directions: "Our attention now focusses on the very first image of the play. A girl holds a small window up to a boy who taps on it with a branch. The branch breaks the window pane." (p. 95) That was the first "image." And, indeed, stage directions beginning Scene 2, state: "A girl carries a window. A boy taps a branch against it." (p. 17) The images are certainly the same

in terms of what materials have been used to represent them, but like many poetic images there is a slight change from first to second usage.

The first use of the window and the branch seems to be a call to the audience to look out and see the power of nature before them. They must look through a window to see the reality of the work which is to be presented to them. That reality is going to develop because of the force of the wind, the same wind which causes the branch to tap at the window pane. It is a call of the imagination to free itself from the confines of the mind. It is certainly a symbol of the problem of the Canadian imagination.

D. G. Jones points out that the Canadian culture has moved into the natural wilderness but rather than integrate with it has chosen to build towns that protect themselves from it. Our dwelling places are "garrisons besieged by the hostile forces of the wilderness".⁴ Nature is seen as a hostile force to be kept out of the cultural environment, and hence is thought of as a malevolent force in the Canadian imagination. Reaney, in describing the wind previous to the appearance of the "image", clearly defines it as a malevolent force:

Down from the north over the wilderness
For one purpose they come
The fierce howling mother and the rain her doll,
The black huntsman and his men,
The wind and the wild, wild rain

To make the branch tap at my windowpane
 To cry and to tap at my windowpane.
 (Scene 2, p. 17)

It is a fierce and howling mother with rain as a toy. It brings the "black huntsman" with it. It cries out some statement as yet not understandable: "What are you writing on the frosty pane?/ What words do you scratch on my crystal brain?" (Scene 2, p. 17). The audience must look out that window, must listen to that wind, must search for an answer.

The answer will come after that pane is broken. And indeed, that is the change in "the very first image in the play" when it recurs. Nature has been accepted into the garrison. Instead of the preceding struggle the two worlds can be assimilated one into the other and some kind of resolution can occur. At this point the audience has watched and been moved with nature to the extent that it is finally willing to join with it and become part of the creative energy which has been moving the action forward. This moves the playgoer, and in this case the Canadian, into what Margaret Atwood calls "Position Four: To be a creative non-victim".⁵ This moves the imaginative viewer or, better still, participant from looking out of the window and acknowledging that he is a victim to the forces of nature and seeing that as necessity (Position Two according to Atwood)⁶ to a position where "creative activity of all kinds becomes possible".⁷ Indeed, this might explain the one

ending in which Angela must die a victim, and even is acknowledged as such: "Poor girl, I guess you could not help it. Your father played a similar trick on my mother." (Scene 46, p. 102) In the alternative ending Angela lives and so, perhaps, does Owen. According to Margaret Atwood this is a usual movement for Reaney: "Reaney is unusual in that he typically jumps from Position Two to Position Four with no mention at all of Position Three".⁸

His stage directions in that final scene indicate the power of the creative imagination over time and space:

The three girl cousins and Owen walk to the front of the stage with four small chairs in their hands which they set down in front of them. Huge shadows are cast behind them. They are free -- in Eternity -- they will never taste death again.

(Scene 49, p. 112)

The imaginative world has been met on its own terms. "Owen now recognizes that 'rules of joy' are not subject to the conventions of naturalism and realism, that the soul has a freedom to choose that defies external circumstances over which one has no control."⁹ With the final image of the play -- "the giant shadows of the four genii lean over the dawn they have made" (Scene 49, p. 113) -- we are again reminded of the four Brontë children whose imaginative world was protected by the "Princes of the Genii". To their imaginative world it was 'the Genii's promise of protection and future glory: "I tell you all that ye shall one day be kings."¹⁰ Not only have Owen, Harriet, Ann and Jenny been

able to fully enter the world of fantasy but, hopefully, the audience in its imaginative participation has also discovered the power of the creative imagination.

Reaney talks of another of his images as summing up the play. I quote at length from the section wherein he envisages the centre:

As the "carriage" journeys with Maria to the station it should go on a journey that takes in part of the auditorium so that the boy running with the wheel "enchants" itself into the onlookers' minds. (In the original production this mime seemed to sum up the play. Devil Caresfoot limps over to the "carriage" but once "in" it he runs like a boy. The various journeys can also have various "distance" conventions; for example, a physicist who watched the play remarked that the places farthest away had the shortest trips.)

(Stage Directions, Scene 9, p. 30).

It would seem to be a curious thing when a wheel can enchant itself into the mind of the audience and, moreover, "sum up the play"; when an old man becomes a young boy once he is "in" the wheel (carriage); and when the farthest thing away takes the shortest time to reach. There seems to be nothing realistic about this kind of situation. But then, there is no pretension to realism in an imaginative work, only perhaps, insights or suggestions to reality. What we probably ought to be looking at is the symbolism of the wheel which seems to be able to perform these amazing departures from reality, keeping in mind that we have already established that one of Reaney's main concerns in this work is the audience's involvement as an active participant in

the creative process.

A wheel is a circle. A circle is a mandala. Carl Jung explains the meaning of the mandala: "Formation, Transformation, Eternal Mind's eternal recreation."¹¹ He sees it as an archetypal image which signifies the "wholeness of the self".¹² In mythic terms the circular image represents the divinity incarnate in man. The mandala is an image indicating the search for unity.¹³ Reaney is searching for the fullest possible expression of the creative imagination in man. One of his primary motives in the presentation of this play is to reveal and perhaps to teach man to find the expression and unity which can be derived from the use of his imagination. An old man can become a boy behind the circle. That is a visual image of the union of the imagination and reality. The circle can enchant the audience, for that symbol has enchanted man for centuries in his search for his identity. That that identity can be realized through the functioning imagination is not unknown to the world of psychology.

Dr. Marie-Louis von Franz speaks of the two aspects of the mandala:

The mandala serves a conservative purpose -- namely, to restore a previously existing order. But it also serves the creative purpose of giving expression and form to something that does not yet exist, something new and unique. The second aspect is perhaps even more important than the first, but does not contradict it. For, in most cases, what restores the old order simultaneously involves some element of new creation. In the new order the older

pattern returns on a higher level. The process is that of the ascending spiral, which grows upwards while simultaneously returning again and again to the same point.¹⁴

This is not unlike the previously discussed theory of art put forth by Northrop Frye. The mandala is a search for some kind of unified image whether it be unity of self or unity in art. "In the new order the older pattern returns on a higher level" is akin to the theory that art is built upon art and that the artist creates his own "distinctive sense of form". But the important aspect of Dr. M-L. von Franz's explanation is the fact that the mandala serves a "creative purpose". And indeed, Owen and the other children do attain the fulfillment of that "creative purpose". Jung looked at the mandala as "Eternal Mind's eternal recreation". Owen, Ann, Jenny and Harriet are, in the end, "free -- in Eternity -- they will never taste death again." The wheel which transforms an old man to a boy, suspends time and space (achieves eternity?), seems to sum up the play, also moves physically forward, moves the audience towards the total freedom of the imagination which can produce a new reality.

The circle as a symbol of creative energy is not unknown in Reaney's work. The emerging poet in The Red Heart again and again looks to the circular sun as a means by which he will be able to achieve some kind of eternal existence. In discussing "The Heart and the Sun", Alvin

Lee points out: "the desire for union with the kingdom of the Sun . . . is one variant of a romantic aspiration towards a fulfilling, harmonious vision of beauty and power, as the means of transcending the confinement and death of a purely earthly existence."¹⁵ The sun is, of course, the original symbol of giver of life as well as the embodiment of eternity. It is the only visible eternity, perhaps the mandala. But its dual symbolic force as both time and eternity is recognized by Reaney and, I think, the young poet recognizes his kinship to it at least creatively.

In the poem above mentioned, the Sun speaks only once, in the final three lines:

"Alas, my Love, it is your fate and mine
That I someday smother whom I kindle
And give birth to those I'll someday kill."¹⁶

Certainly Owen shares this position in Listen to the Wind for it is he who decides to turn the death straw slightly (Scene 49) in determining Angela's fate. Moreover, when in that final scene he sees himself as achieving that eternal existence longed for he too gives birth or at least gives back life to Angela. In Listen to the Wind, Reaney answers the questions posed in "The Red Heart" (Poems, p. 51):

So does the sun hang now
From a branch of Time
In this wild fall sunset.
Who shall pick the sun
From the tree of Eternity?
Who shall thresh the ripe sun?
What midwife shall deliver
The Sun's great heir?

(ll. 12-19).

Again and again in The Red Heart there never seems to be an answer to such questions, but when in "The Sundogs" (Poems, pp. 46-47) the "Sun's animals" state

We stand by him in the West
And ready to obey
His most auburn wish
For Rain, Wind and Storm."
(ll. 54-57)

we cannot but return to the initial image of Listen to the Wind and remember the initial call to the audience to see the wind and the rain, the storm to come. The function of the sundogs may be the function of the audience. If they obey the order of the sun they may break the bounds and achieve a unity with her. It is a matter of being able to perceive and connect the images.

In Scene 18, p. 41, the Stage Directions read: "The antlered figure darts so we know we are in the forest". The image is called for six times in the play and though the forest may be literal enough (it occurs three times when Geraldine and Douglas are in huts in the forest, once before a storm, once when Angela is sitting by the haunted well, and again when Angela is travelling to Arthur's betrothal dance), I think that probably it is more a figurative image indicating something more than place. The forest could be the wilderness, that malevolent force which again and again is acknowledged to be imbedded in the Canadian consciousness. Northrop Frye notes:

I have long been impressed in Canadian poetry by a tone of deep terror in regard to nature It is not a terror of the dangers or discomforts or even the mysteries of nature, but a terror of the soul at something that these things manifest. The human mind has nothing but human and moral values to cling to if it is to preserve its integrity or even its sanity, yet the vast unconsciousness of nature in front of it seems an unanswerable denial of those values.¹⁷

This is an extension of the view which he expresses earlier in the book: "Nature is seen by the poet, first as unconsciousness, then as a kind of existence which is cruel and meaningless, then as the source of the cruelty and subconscious stampedings within the human mind."¹⁸ The "terror of the soul" is experienced in this work by Angela. Scene 35 is a visual enactment of that terror. Angela comes to her old tutor and asks his aid, because, as she tells him, "the moment Arthur left they began to persecute me". The persecutors are "Father, Lady Eldred, my cousin Douglas" (p. 76). If these people are indeed persecuting Angela and she feels helpless in their hands and, moreover, if they can be associated with nature, then we have Angela assuming Margaret Atwood's Position Two and these three people assuming the position of nature in that situation. If Angela can overcome these forces she can become an ex-victim and assume Atwood's Position Four. Remember that this is Reaney's characteristic move in literature.

Piers is early associated with money and dead animals. Like the early trappers of the Canadian wilderness

who exploited the environment, killing animals in order to receive money for their skins, Piers, in his need to obtain money kills animals, has become a "cattle drover and dealer in dead animals" (Scene 27, p. 65):

ANN:

At twilight after he has finished his farming work he goes round the countryside with a cage and catches stray dogs, runaway dogs and any loose dogs that fall in his way.

JENNY:

What does he do with them?

ANN:

He puts them in kennels at the back of the Court and starves them.

OWEN:

Does he keep them?

ANN:

No. Every month a doctor comes with a cart and takes all the poor dogs away. Then Piers gets his money and goes out collecting again.
(Scene 22, p. 50)

He has become a perverted hunter. Instead of using the dogs as assistance in trapping his prey, he traps dogs as his prey. He is a malevolent hunter who consistently offends rather than protects his daughter:

Oh Mr. Gleneden, my father is such a gray old wolf. I feel it in my bones. Look -- a hair on his sleeve came off on my dress. It's a collie dog's hair. He's started to collect the lost dogs again though he knows I can't stand it.

(Scene 43, p. 91)

Even his daughter describes him as a "wolf", a predatory creature, who victimizes and kills his prey. Moreover, she

acknowledges that there is nothing that she can do about his actions, and so assumes very much a Position Two: Victor/Victim situation.

Douglas, too, takes on the role of a hunter:

Douglas hunts in the forest. Sets traps. Runs his farms. Never smiles. Gallops about on his black horse. Listen! Hear the hooves of his horse underneath the river of wind!

(Scene 22, p. 52).

From the above description, Douglas seems to be nothing more than a very sober hunter-trapper in the traditional sense. But this is not quite the case:

DOUGLAS:

Come, Rogue. Spring this trap open and I'll put the bait in.

ROGUE:

Oh I'm afraid of these traps, mister.

DOUGLAS:

What are you afraid of? It doesn't hurt me.
He catches his hand in a trap.
Come on -- try it.

ROGUE:

All right, mister. He screams.

DOUGLAS:

Well, you poor idiot, how else are you going to get your hands as tough as mine.

He unsprings him

Now, they're all set. Three in the copse, and two in the hazel thicket, one at the roots of Caresfoot's Staff. One at the culvert -- and Rogue I'll set you to watch out for the girl who thinks she can spring any trap of mine. Rogue -- look here -- this thicket is alive with young partridges. Let's see if I can pick off a few.

Cap pistol. Douglas laughs as the birds fly off.

(Scene 24, p. 55)

Douglas takes delight in hurting. He victimizes Rogue, perfectly aware of the hurt that will follow the child's placing his hand into the trap. As early as this he also acknowledges that he is hunting for "the girl who thinks that she can spring any trap of mine". Nor can he allow the partridges to reach maturity before he victimizes them. He attempts to "pick off a few" and then, as he laughs at Rogue's hurt, also laughs at their fear. This is the victimizing sporting hunter. He enjoys death and hurting for their own sake. That he should be associated with a black horse seems appropriate. He is the archetypal figure of death known to all in the Hans Christian Andersen tale The Seven Dreams. Angela recognizes too his power over her : "I've always been afraid of him." (Scene 35, p. 78) and indeed has been warned many times in her childhood that "the Black Huntsman will get her" (Scene 23, p. 52). Again we have in the Douglas-Angela relationship a Victor/Victim situation.

Lady Eldred also assumes some kind of relationship with predatory creatures. She, a child of nature, a gypsy, has murdered her own natural child. The ghost of that child curses her: "You'll be seven long years a wolf in the woods." (Scene 7, p. 28) She is directed to the "weasel's den" (Scene 20, p. 46) where she destroyed her "whelp" (Scene 30, p. 69). The weasel and the wolf are scavengers,

shrewd and threatening. Certainly it is Reaney's view that she fits into this category for in his stage directions he describes her actions in conjunction with Sir Edward: "they work together like oily foxes." (Scene 40, p. 85) She herself explains her role: "A wolf from the woods is what I shall be. God help the deer whose throat I catch my teeth in." (Scene 7, p. 29) She is a hunter in search of a victim and that victim she chooses to describe as a deer.

She has acknowledged in Scene 31 that she will be driven to "destroy such a pretty young girl" (p. 70). She openly confronts Angela across a bridge:

Because I reflect that Douglas Caresfoot has made up his mind to marry you, and I have made up mine to help him to do so, and that your will, strong as it certainly is, is, as compared with our united wills, what a dead leaf is to this strong East Wind. Angela, the leaf cannot travel against the wind, it MUST go with it, and you MUST marry Douglas Caresfoot. You will certainly come to the altar rails with him as you will to your deathbed. It is written in your face. Goodbye, Angela.

(Scene 35, p. 78)

The malevolent Lady Eldred is certain of her victory. This confrontation by Geraldine, which in its threat includes a combination of malevolent forces of nature, the East Wind, and the cruelty existent in the minds of man, expresses totally the movement into or the effect of nature upon the Canadian consciousness as expressed by Northrop Frye (see p. 24). The question relevant here, though, is whether

or not the deer Lady Eldred chooses to describe as her victim is, in fact, Angela.

To the extent that Angela is her chosen victim, one would have to say that the deer represents the girl. This does not necessarily imply that the same stag image repeatedly appearing before the audience is Angela as well. It is, however, very probably associated with her. At her birth, Angela is described by her mother as being "An angel messenger" (Scene 21, p. 46). She is, then, a heavenly creature. She is also described by Gerladine as "one of the most beautiful women I have ever seen" (Scene 38, p. 81). She is associated with the moon three times during the play. When she is ill, having had a fearful nightmare, she requests to look out the window. What she sees is a clearing moon: "The moon is struggling with the clouds. But the night wind soon will clear them from her face." (Scene 25, p. 60) Clearly this is some inspiration to Angela and, moreover, it reflects perfectly her present condition, for she has been delirious in illness and the haze of the unconscious is now lifting. When the candle representing Angela (Scene 30) goes out, Angela says, "Oh Arthur -- my candle's drowned. But the moon shall be my candle and she is brighter now than the day." (Scene 31, p. 70) Again she associates herself with the moon and sees it as some kind of guide or inspiration. Again it is a feminine moon. Her

final association with the moon is as she travels to Arthur's betrothal ball and Martha notes that the moon is "skating along over the snow drifts beside us." (Scene 48, p. 111) In this case the moon is not a guide. Rather, Angela notes "We've got a head start!". Directly after that statement the stag image appears.

Angela is concerned about the welfare of animals. She, as was formerly noted, springs Douglas's traps, for, as she puts it, "I'm not going to walk to school with rabbits and other poor things twisting their hearts out by my feet." (Scene 23, p. 54) She bandages up Rogue's hand and at the same time notices that a puppy has been caught in one of the traps:

Why this trap by the culvert has caught something already. Look, Rogue, a little white puppy. Aw, is your paw badly hurt. Here -- I'll bind up both your paws together.

(Scene 24, p. 56)

She cannot justify the suffering of animals and when she learns that Douglas gives the carcasses of the animals he has skinned to her father to feed the dogs which are ultimately going to be cut up alive, "She dashes at the kennels and lets the dogs go." (Stage directions Scene 24, p. 59) She protects the young animals to the extent of risking her own life.

We have established that Angela is being persecuted and, having realized this, fits nicely into Margaret

Atwood's "Position Two". But she eventually transcends that position entirely. She comes under the protection of the four genii. It could perhaps be said that it is nothing more than poetic justice or the convention of the Victorian melodrama that allows the heroine to survive against the forces of evil. But I think there is another consideration here. The lady encompasses many of the characteristics of the mythological figure Artemis:

She was one of the three maiden goddesses of OlympusShe was the Lady of Wild Things, Huntsman-in-chief to the gods, an odd office for a woman. Like a good huntsman, she was careful to preserve the young; she was "the protectress of dewy youth" everywhereAs Phoebus was the Sun, she was the moonThe cypress was sacred to her; and all wild animals, but especially the deer.¹⁹

Angela is a heavenly creature, very beautiful, and a maiden of the woods, for she grows up in the forests around Caresfoot Court. She is a protector of animals and is associated with the moon. When she finally enters the creative eternity established by the four children, she does so accompanied by the moon and a deer. The malevolent forces that oppose her can also be placed within a mythological framework.

Piers fits into two archetypal patterns. He sells his daughter for money and so becomes the Judas figure:

You Judas who sold me. They bought the use of me from you for a year, didn't they, Judas? And when they had duped me good and properly then you

got your title and the land back, Squire Caresfoot.
Squire Judas.

(Scene 46, p. 103)

But his offense is not against an earthly creature. It is a vow broken to one who is in eternity (Claudia) and, moreover, against Angela who comes from eternity. Angela is a messenger from heaven and, indeed, is akin to the goddess Artemis. Piers, the hunter of animals, has offended the protectress of animals and like Actaeon is killed by his own dogs. (pp. 105-106)

It has already been suggested that Douglas becomes a kind of figure of death riding his black horse. Certainly the chorus's incantation before the arrival of "the East Wind of Hate" would suggest such a reading:

Over the hills and under the sky
The huntsman and his hounds,
The huntsman's dark and 12 feet high --
Hear him galloping by.

· · · · ·

Over the hills and under the sky
The huntsman and his hounds --
"Have you blood for us and any bones?"
Hear their thrilling cry.

(Scene 43, pp. 94-95)

This is a dark malevolent huntsman who cries out for blood and bones, constituents of life. Moreover it is a cry directed towards humans as they are told, "Lock up your doors and pen your flocks". Horsemen are repeatedly galloping by and more often than not the horseman is identified as Douglas, always in association with a black horse:

It's Master Douglas galloping away on his black horse.

(Scene 23, p. 54)

Angela associates the slaughterhouse with Douglas:

There's the slaughterhouse, Arthur. That's the dog that guards it. And the lane into Douglas's house. Ah, what a dark green shadowy tunnel that is for the black stallion to come shooting out of.

(Scene 34, p. 74)

Moreover, she sees the black of death emerging from the green tunnel of life and nature. Furthermore, when reminded that "the Black Huntsman will be ye" (Scene 25, p. 60), Angela replies, "Some day, Martha, I see that I may have to ride with him. But not very far. Only to the star that shines on my mother's lost comb." (Scene 25, p. 61) The lost comb is like Angela's lost mother, somewhere in eternity. When it is found it is discovered among "dead leaves" (p. 66).

"Like Madam Fay, Bethel, and Charlotte Shade, only more so, Lady Eldred is an infernal character associated with sorcery and the black arts."²⁰ She says of herself: "there is within me a Spirit of Power that I've always known was mine ever since I helped my father with his mesmerism." (Scene 7, p. 26) Piers describes her as "Rather the sorceress, isn't she?" (Scene 11, p. 34). Douglas recognizes her as a "hell dog" (Scene 20, p. 45). As a counterpart to Angela, a kind of moon goddess, Lady Eldred becomes a "Hecate in the lower world and in the world

above when it is wrapped in darkness. Hecate was the Goddess of the Dark of the Moon, the black nights when the moon is hidden. She was associated with deeds of darkness, the Goddess of the Crossways, which were held to be ghostly places of evil magic."²¹ As Angela is emerging from her haze of delirium in Scene 25, Lady Eldred stands in the shadows and makes a sinister delirium sound with a button that spins on a string (Stage Directions). As the moon clears, Angela asks Martha, "Do you hear a humming sound?" (p. 60). Martha replies in the negative. As the light of the moon appears, the Spirit of Darkness must disappear.

The stag image, then, connotes more than just place. It becomes associated with the malevolent Nature image in Canadian imagination. It also becomes associated with Artemis, the huntress and protectress of the deer, with her counterpart Hecate, the Goddess of the dark moon, with Actaeon who in offending Artemis was turned into a stag and eaten by his own dogs, and finally, with the Black Huntsman of death.

As in his early poems, Reaney's vision of death really includes its juxtaposition with life and love as well. But, where formerly death is seen as an ugly thing,

So love, though measured breath by breath,
 May seem like walking in a summer dream,
 Visiting nowhere but pleasant places;
 So love does often lead a filthy way to Death.
 ("A Fantasy and a Moral", Poems, p. 90)

it is now capable of being transcended so that some kind of eternal existence can be achieved. Whether or not a final "eternity" is going to be attained does not discount the macabre elements within the play where we have mothers killing babies, children killing parents, a Black Huntsman and even a coffin.

In his satirical One-man Masque Reaney presents us with images of life:

The gentleman of life is made up of the following objects: simple objects that you'd find around any house. One cradle, one small child's chair, one baby carriage, some adult chairs, one table not too profusely set although here we have one plate, one knife, one fork, one spoon, one cup and one saucer. Here is a bed and here is a rocking-chair. Here is a coffin. That's life for you.²²

The cradle-coffin continuum as a statement of life is contained in the first few lines of dialogue in Listen to the Wind:

OWEN:

And your ancestors -- Ann?

ANN:

Mother lost the baby, poor little dear. She's very ill. We've all been packed off.

(Scene 1, p. 13)

The newly alive child dies and moves straight to the coffin. The coffin "image" is a central one around which the questions of life, love, death and eternity evolve.

In order to trick Angela into betraying her oath to Arthur, she is confronted by a supposedly dead Arthur in a

sequence which involves the drugging and burying alive of Rogue. It is a visual enactment of the conversation held earlier between Owen and Mitch:

OWEN:

Tell me something that will freeze my marrow and chill my bones.

MITCH:

Well there was this man -- Buried alive, Mr. Owen. Poor bugger. We'd buried him alive.

He mimes this -- Owen laughs and shivers

(Scene 6, p. 24).

In this case it is a story about a real occurrence. The re-enactment of that episode in Owen's play is not a real death (insofar as anything can be "real" in any play). As it is portrayed, however, it to some extent must enchant itself into the minds of the audience for it moves right into the physical situation of the audience:

Rogue's coffin becomes part of a death coach mime which wheels out into the audience -- have horse-hoof sounds that differentiate between the hollow sounds of bridge and the solid roads. Hear bits of chain rattling on the harness, horses whinnying. The coach is searching for Angela. It has candles and lamps. The coachman cracks his whip.

(Stage directions, Scene 39, p. 84)

As it is an imaginary death to trick Angela, it must embed itself into the minds of the audience as a marvellous imaginary construct on its own. Interestingly the formerly discussed images of the wheel and the horse are included in the mime. There is not only an imaginary death here, but also an imaginary resurrection. Both are achieved through art.

Admittedly, this pattern of life, death and possible life after death or eternity is achieved by the black arts of the Lady of darkness, the sorceress Lady Eldred. Of course, her actions are necessarily framed by the imaginary construct as the emerging artist, Owen, sees it. But it is important to remember that the death-life mime occurs because of the desire for money and property of the Judas figure, Piers and the lust of the Black Huntsman of death, Douglas.

We have noticed that Douglas is usually depicted as a horseman, nearly always riding his "black stallion". Furthermore, he has been associated with a kind of Death figure. There is however another aspect of him not yet accounted for. He lusts after Angela: "Take me over to her, Geraldine. She's the girl I mean to marry, and you shall manage it for me." (Scene 27, p. 66) This horseman then becomes associated with the mythological Centaurs, half man, half horse. These creatures are depicted in Greek art as attendants to Dionysius, the God of wine. They are often accompanied by the lascivious satyrs and are frequently shown to be ridden by the god of Love, Eros. Douglas becomes a kind of archetypal lustful being. Such a horseman is well known in literature:

His angry steede did chide his foming bitt
As much disdayning to the curbe to yield: 23

This is Spenser's Redcrosse knight who cannot control his

horse and, indeed, his lustful desires, as we see him become involved with the sensual Duessa. Redcrosse is ultimately saved from sin with the assistance of Una, the beautiful veiled lady. He is capable of controlling his lustful desires, indeed, "his angry steede". He is able to see the truth. But the "Faunes" and "Satyres" are unable to do so. They first meet Una unveiled and "All stand astonied at her beautie bright" (I.6.9, l. 8) much as Douglas is transfixed when he sees Angela through the window in Scene 27. They can never learn the goodness Una has to teach. They can only worship her. Similarly, Douglas can see no further than Angela's beauty.

In order to marry Angela he joins forces with Lady Eldred. Like Duessa, Geraldine is a mistress of the black arts. Duessa's ally in The Faerie Queene is Archimago. Douglas, then, becomes associated with Archimago. "The evil magician and the witch, Spenser's Archimago and Duessa, are the black king and queen. The latter is appropriately called by Jung the 'terrible mother', and he associates her with the fear of incest and with such hags as Medusa who seem to have a suggestion of erotic perversion about them."²⁴ Interestingly, Angela, in the alternate ending, emerging from her illness looks at the sky and sees a symbol of Medusa:

Now -- I know that star. It is the tooth of Medusa's Head which Perseus holds. My whole life has been spent beneath its influence. Which of the twelve winds of Heaven shall blow it out? The West Wind! The West Wind! Oh come and help me free the prisoner, the river frozen in the jail of winter.

(Scene 48, p. 109)

The malevolent influence of Medusa has up until now, controlled Angela's life. Indeed, Lady Eldred has contrived to destroy her. Freedom comes to Angela when, immediately following the recognition of the power of Medusa, Lady Eldred, "the terrible mother" dies. Lady Eldred's counterpart in the "real" world of the play is the horsewoman, Mrs. Taylor, Owen's mother.

Mrs. Taylor makes her position as a mother and a wife quite clear: "I don't care about Owen. I don't care about my husband. I care a bit about my horses." (Scene 26, p. 62) She cannot abide impotence and death and these are the two things with which she is confronted when she faces her husband and her son:

You know it's almost as if you drank, but it isn't drink that makes you so stupid -- it's air. Just the air you breathe. And inside you're rotten. The baby girl you gave me -- died. Now the baby boy is. I want nothing more to do with you.

(Scene 26, p. 63)

As sexual symbols she can retreat to her horses; but, I think, more than that, the world of the horse with which she chooses to surround herself gives to her a kind of alter-reality, a place wherein she can exist. She is akin

to D. H. Lawrence's Lou in St. Mawr where the magnificent animal leads Lou to a reality which she can accept. The animal becomes a symbol of freedom for her.²⁵ It is certainly a creative will that inspires Lou to leave her environment and seek a new "reality" for herself. That kind of creativity does exist in part in Mrs. Taylor.

She relates her husband and her children to a destructive rather than a creative process. They do not live. And yet "Mother loves plays" (Scene 1, p. 14). She returns "To be at his play. In it -- too." (Scene 26, p. 63). The imaginary world seems to be in some way satisfying to her. She can become the evil Geraldine who destroys in her creating. The imaginary world is acceptable. Whether good or evil, it is a world she can face. In speaking of the family in Canadian Literature, Margaret Atwood points out: "in Canada it's a trap in which you're caught."²⁶ Mrs. Taylor can see the creative imagination as an escape but does not know quite what to do about it. She finds it easier to move her life into another real world setting.

Owen, on the other hand, takes neither the passive nor the escapist route in dealing with his "trap", but rather chooses to face the world around him, attempt to come to grips with it, change it if possible, but ultimately become a creative being in it. Owen seems to be the emerging poet artist who faces possible extinction, a familiar

figure in Reaney's work: Kenneth in The Easter Egg, Eli in The Killdeer and, perhaps, the poet persona in The Red Heart. The question here, though, is whether or not it is Owen who faces extinction in death or Owen the artist whose art faces extinction. Certainly Owen does seem to be dying. Dr. Spettigue seems to allude to death:

Relax yourself. When it comes -- you'll never know
it has come. It may never come. What you must do
-- is live. Remember now. Live. Your cousins
have come to play with you. Put on your play.
I'll help you. Dream it out -- as you say. Dream
it out, Owen.

(Scene 6, p. 24)

And yet when he comes right down to the question of mortality he decides that "It may never come" stating that Owen must live. Moreover, it would seem that Dr. Spettigue's answer to the problem of living and dying is to "Dream it out", imagine, create. Owen has a "fit" during the night and sees himself as dying: "If you keep on letting go of me -- I'll slip away" (Scene 41, p. 88). We have seen that his mother is sure that he will die and his father suggests that it is very nearly time: "Owen -- I have a feeling -- that he'll go tonight" (Scene 47, p. 107).

At the beginning of Act Three, Owen and Mitch discuss the possibility of God, as Owen seems to have decided that he will die:

OWEN:

Mitch -- you'll dig my grave and bury me,
won't you.

MITCH:

No Owen.

OWEN:

That's the part that frightens me the most.
Lying out there with the others. Who'd you
bury yesterday?

MITCH:

You don't lie out there. There's Heaven and
all that.

OWEN:

No -- there isn't. Not for a long time anyhow.

MITCH:

Don't you believe in God, Owen?

OWEN:

Sometimes -- I think he's the evillest person
around.

MITCH:

You mustn't say that Owen. He died for you on
the cross.

OWEN:

He -- the older one didn't Mitch. He made the
tree that the cross was cut out of, don't
forget.

(Scene 44, pp. 97-98)

Furthermore, he sees it as an end. Mitch continues in a magnificent sequence demonstrating how he took all of his grandmother's medicine -- everything from mineral oil to belladonna -- when he was feeling "rather poorly" once and he didn't die. He then wonders how there can't be a God. Owen's response is "I believe, I believe. Mitch -- can I have a blue bottle and a red one. And a yellow one."

(Scene 44, p. 99) He then proceeds to look at the sun through the coloured bottles. And the sun changes. Remembering that we identified the sun as unity and, indeed, as eternity. Owen, then, is looking at eternity. Moreover he is looking through colours, symbols of the creative imagination in Reaney's next play Colours in the Dark.

After his next brush with death (the fit formerly mentioned) Owen can let his heroine live. His created world becomes a positive one. After this Reaney notes: "They are free -- in Eternity -- they will never taste death again." Owen's art has transcended life and death, both real (his own physical struggle) and imaginary (the coffin and Rogue). It does so by the use of the creative imagination. The windowpane has been broken.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER ONE

¹The Educated Imagination, p. 12.

²William Shakespeare, Othello, ed. M. R. Ridley (London: Arden, Methuen, 1967), I.iii, pp. 40-41. All further references are from this edition.

³Othello, p. 40 n.

⁴D. G. Jones, Butterfly on Rock (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 41. It must be noted that the idea of garrison towns finds its germination in Northrop Frye's "Conclusion" in Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl F. Klinck et al (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 830. I quote: "such communities are bound to develop what we may provisionally call a garrison mentality."

⁵Margaret Atwood, Survival (Toronto: Anansi, 1972), p. 38. Again the intellectual concepts behind Atwood's four positions lie in Frye's "Conclusion".

⁶Survival, p. 37.

⁷Survival, p. 38.

⁸Survival, p. 204.

⁹Ross Woodman, James Reaney (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), p. 52.

¹⁰Ratchford, p. 14.

¹¹Carl G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, ed. Aniela Jaffé, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Vintage, 1963), p. 196.

¹²Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 335.

- ¹³Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 335.
- ¹⁴Dr. M-L. von Franz, "The Process of Individuation", in Carl Jung, ed., Man and His Symbols (New York: Dell, 1969), pp. 247-48.
- ¹⁵Lee, James Reaney, p. 34.
- ¹⁶James Reaney, "The Heart and the Sun" from The Red Heart in Poems, p. 50, ll. 41-43. All poems from The Red Heart are taken from this edition and will be acknowledged in the text.
- ¹⁷Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden (Toronto: Anansi, 1971), p. 225.
- ¹⁸The Bush Garden, pp. 141-142.
- ¹⁹Edith Hamilton, Mythology (New York: Mentor, 1942), pp. 31-32.
- ²⁰Lee, James Reaney, p. 151.
- ²¹Mythology, pp. 31-32.
- ²²James Reaney, One-Man Masque, in The Killdeer and Other Plays (Toronto: Macmillan, 1962), p. 175.
- ²³Edmund Spenser, The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, Vol. II, Spenser's Faerie Queene, ed. J. C. Smith (London: Oxford, 1972), Book I, Canto I, i, ll. 6-7. All further references are from this edition and will be acknowledged in the text.
- ²⁴Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton: University Press, 1971), p. 196.
- ²⁵See D. H. Lawrence, St. Mawr, in St. Mawr and the Man who Died (New York: Vintage, 1953). In St. Mawr "she seemed to hear the echoes of another darker, more spacious, more dangerous, more splendid world than ours, that was beyond her. And there she wanted to go." (p. 27)

CHAPTER TWO

LISTENING TO THE WIND

Francis Bacon in The New Organon states:

Human knowledge and human power meet in one, for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. Nature to be commanded must be obeyed, and that which in contemplation is as the cause is in operation as the rule.¹

Having acknowledged that a central symbol within the Canadian imagination seems to be the human survival of the malevolent forces of nature, necessarily a struggle with her follows. That struggle is usually one in which the primary motive is to overcome the force, to command Nature. The usual action in this struggle is either to succumb, to build a garrison for protection or to move headlong into nature and wage open warfare (as, for instance, the needless slaughter of the now very nearly extinct wolf). None of these methods are commensurate with Bacon's advice. There is no contemplation, no assimilation and therefore no communion. Bacon advises a movement with Nature not against her.

At first glance it would seem that Bacon is advising that man observe Nature from a purely scientific point of view. Darwin serves as an example:

The cemented mass is generally of a white colour, but in some few parts reddish from ferruginous matter: it is very hard, and is sonorous under the hammer: it is obscurely divided by seams, dipping

at a small angle seaward: it consists of fragments of the corals which grow on the outer margin, some quite and others partially rounded, some small and others between two and three feet across; and of masses of previously formed conglomerate, torn up, rounded, and re-cemented: or it consists of a calcareous sandstone, entirely composed of rounded particles, generally almost blended together, of shells, corals, the spines of echini, and other organic bodies; -- rocks, of this latter kind, occur on many shores, where there are no coral-reefs.²

Darwin faithfully observes and reports his findings about the Coral Reefs. He then goes on to theorize about the origins of the reefs. Having contemplated the cause he will then have established the rule and, in effect, be able to command nature. But there is yet another interpretation of Bacon's precepts.

Henry Thoreau takes Bacon's precept quite literally as he moves into total communion with nature, because, as he said, "I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could learn what it had to teach".³ In so doing, the following is experienced by him:

Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in revery, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang around or flitted noiseless through the house, until by the sun falling in by my west window, or the noise of some traveller's wagon in the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time . . . My days were not the days of the week, bearing the stamp of any heathen deity, nor were they minced into hours and fretted by the ticking of a clock; for I lived like

the Puri Indians, of whom it is said that "for yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow they have only one word, and they express the variety of meaning by pointing backward for yesterday, forward for to-morrow, and overhead for the passing day."⁴

He watches and listens to the nature surrounding him. He does not attack or retreat from it but rather meets it on its own terms and discovers a very special reality. His life is a kind of everlasting life, outside the realm of time, a kind of eternity.

And yet, we have said that Darwin, too, followed Bacon's ideas literally. Darwin establishes "scientific" truths. Thoreau, on the other hand, develops philosophical, psychological and perhaps imaginative realities from his observations. Interestingly, Bacon would undoubtedly have understood the truth in both opinions. For he, too, was well aware of the power of the metaphor and the reality of it. Again, in The New Organon, he states:

Wherefore, as in religion we are warned to show our faith by works, so in philosophy by the same rule the system should be judged of by its fruits, and pronounced frivolous if it be barren, more especially if, in place of fruits of grape and olive, it bear thorns and briars of dispute and contention.⁵

These are not scientifically real grapes, olives, thorns or briars. They are images of positives and negatives, producing and non-producing philosophies. Notice, too, that these images are being used in a defense of useful philosophy, the kind of thing Thoreau is concerned with. Moreover, acknowledging that philosophy can be good he continues his

argument in LXXIV by making analogies with it to define good and bad scientific methodology. This may very well be the prime consideration in his work, but literary parallels are real and viable to him.

Sinclair Ross uses the wind as both a real and a symbolic force in his As For Me and My House:

The wind keeps on. When you step outside its strong hot push is like something solid pressed against the faceIt's wind in the morning, wind at bedtime. Wind all through the night -- we toss and lie listeningThe wind and the sawing eaves and the rattle of windows have made the house a cell. Sometimes it's as if we had taken shelter here, something as if we were at the bottom of a deep moaning lake. We are quiet and tense and wary. Our muscles and lungs seem pitted to keep the walls from caving in.⁶

As a kind of natural realistic thing, the wind here is a terrifying force. It is necessary to take shelter from it although it is always heard, always listened to. The Bentleys live in their garrison home in a garrison town steeling themselves against the forces of wind and malevolent nature. But it is also symbolic of their psychological states. Both people have denied the creative energies within themselves: Mr. Bentley the painter and Mrs. Bentley the pianist. Having sublimated their energies, denying the creativity within themselves, they have, in effect, garrisoned their souls. As they hide themselves from the creative energy of nature, they hide themselves from their own creative instincts. When they finally move themselves into the

creative world which they desire, there is no longer fear in the wind: "It's blowing tonight, and there's dust again, and the room sways slowly in a yellow smoky haze."⁷ The walls are no longer "caving in". The room simply moves with the wind, as do the creative imaginations of the two people.

It is the same call that Reaney is making to his audience. Listen to the wind and see where it will bring you. Indeed, it is the same call that Dylan Thomas makes to the audience of Under Milk Wood: "Listen. It is night moving in the streets, the processional salt slow musical wind in Coronation Street and Cockle Row"⁸

Listening is the key. It will reveal all. The wind as a destructive force can become a creative one. It is possible to jump from Margaret Atwood's Position Two to Position Four. But the audience must be willing to listen, to move with the wind, to "dream it out", to imagine.

We first see Reaney's use of the four winds in the Red Heart poem "The Two Kites". There he identifies them much as he does in Listen to the Wind. The cold North Wind armours "all with snow and ice." (Poems, pp. 59-60, l. 8) The thawing South Wind "Paints the summer streets of trees / With white, sweet dust" (ll. 11-12). The malevolent East Wind "ruins the Spring" (l. 14), as indeed it ruins the springtime of Angela's youth. The West Wind brings "a storm

and a rainbow" (l. 16). In the play the West wind, that seems to be bringing Angela an unhappy storm in the form of Arthur's betrothal to someone else, instead brings a happy eternal rainbow of love. Furthermore, man in the poem becomes like a kite "Hurried in a direction that depends / Upon which wind of Love or Hate is blowing" (ll. 34-35). Man can be moved by the wind or, rather, with it. But the "Wind will stop" (l. 42) and man will "groan there / Against the still coffin air" (l. 50). As yet, man cannot transcend the wind. Neither can he move beyond the coffin.

In 1956, however, "The Windyard" (Poems, p. 107) expresses the possibility of moving beyond the traditional four elements, earth, air, fire and water, and suggests a fruitful movement into the self. This could be an expression of the Jungian concept of the search for the unity of self.

I built a windyard for the wind;

 And for the sea I built a well;

 I stood a house up for the earth;

 A stove I hammered for the sun;
 (ll. 1, 5, 9, 13).

The final statement, "I stepped above both house and yard / Into myself" (ll. 23-24) indicates a transcendental movement beyond the confines of routine or ordinary human existence into the truer self and perhaps also into another world outside the normal realm of experience.

In 1959, a year following the publication of A Suit of Nettles, comes "The Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker" (Poems, pp. 116-118) containing Reaney's almost apocalyptic vision of poetry as it has and will develop in his work. The theme of the problem of writing emerges in the first section as he juxtaposes words identifying the tools of that art, such as "form", "hieroglyph", "letter", "message", "sentence", "suffix", "participles" and even "language", with the very images we have seen in his earlier work: "pebble", "bent straw", "dead groundhog", "rushing wind" and "firefly swamp". The second section identifies the problematical aspects of poetry and its images to the poet. He finds "The ravelled string hanged me with despair" (l. 15). He cannot seem to visualize where his art is leading him or if it is really going anywhere at all:

The dead leaves, the lightening, the thunder and the rainbow
 Sailed away with the wind but I didn't,
 The blinking swamp led me muddy nowhere,
 And the feather, it was just a feather, nothing but.
 (ll. 20-23)

The images formerly seem to hold some kind of meaning can be carried "away with the wind". Now the meaning is lost to him. In fact, the feather is nothing more than a real, tangible object, holding no extraneous meanings whatsoever.

Alvin Lee notes that the influence of Northrop Frye on Reaney's work is a basic part of his later work for "what a poet like Reaney comes up against in reading

Fearful Symmetry or Anatomy of Criticism is fundamentally an invitation to immerse himself in the classics of literature in the English Language."⁹ It is this developmental process which is acknowledged in the third section. Here are gathered together the myths of the East: "Buddha the Balloon", of the West: "Christ the Tiger", of Greece and Rome: "Hercules the Lion and Bacchus the Drunkard", and the great artists of English Literature: Spenser, Shakespeare, Sterne and Blake. With the acquaintance of these the poet comes to realize: "Love, Innocence, / Rainbow, Whirlwind and Falling Star". Meanings inherent in images become clear. The formerly untranslatable pebble, dewdrop, string, straw, groundhog, beggar and two canes become meaningful and he reveals their meanings in the fourth section.

Not only does he discover that "The dewdrop was all reality itself / The string was the pathway to Heaven" (ll. 40-41), but he perceives that

The wind was the world of words, all poetry
 At its giant blind Pentecostal source,
 The nine mused and pleated winnowing fan of wisdom,
 The fireflies led me to Noah's Ark,
 And the golden feather sang:
 (ll. 52-56).

The untranslatable "rushing wind" is poetry, the wisdom of words achieved at Pentecost when

suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues
like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.
(Acts of the Apostles 2:2&3)

The Holy Ghost appeared as a rushing wind and with tongues of fire gave the apostles the power of words of wisdom which would then be translatable to all nations. The "fireflies" echo the tongues of fire but the poet recognizes that the Christian myth is not the source of all truths as he acknowledges "the nine mused . . . fan", the nine muses of art in Greek mythology. But the wisdom of the tongue does lead him to "Noah's Ark", by which "a world is kept from death".¹⁰ It is, then, "a symbol of the totality of life unified and preserved from destruction".¹¹ That seems to be a suggestion of the Jungian unity of self and, as such, a movement towards eternal existence. Having understood how poetry evolved, and what it is, Reaney can now see what the image can do and, furthermore, what his own "golden feather" can say.

The song of the golden feather is the whole of the fifth section. It is indeed a song of eternity:

And beats out upon the drum
Of the third state, the other room
Rented to both right and wrong
To both death and life . . . Eternity!

Eternity, that drum, sang the bird.
Play on it with life and with death!
(ll. 65-70)

The wind is words. Words are poetry. Poetry begets wisdom. Wisdom seeks a unity of self. That question can only be pursued by an investigation of existence and, moreover, a

playing off of life and death until "the other room" can be identified. At the achievement of eternity in poetry, all images can be transmuted. A completely new poetic reality can be achieved.

Reaney follows his pattern through to the realization that the pebble is no longer a "mountain that took years to climb" but rather, "The mountain is a pebble in your hand" (l. 73). The string is not a pathway to Heaven, but rather "Heaven Road lies ravelled in your pocket" (l. 75). Time, Space, existence, reality, are all possibilities to be constructed and even controlled by the poet: "And the thousand eyes of fancy make each idle stare / Possible breakthrough to the perfect." (ll. 81-82) Wallace Stevens, in his "Sea Surface Full of Clouds", comes to this same conclusion when he completely abstracts the green sea (life) in juxtaposition with the blue sky (the creative imagination) to produce a "turquoise-turbaned Sambo".¹²

The "Golden Feather" is now fully realized in the last section. The power of poetry and the metaphor are achieved. It is the means "By whose light and in whose world / I show all complexity unfurled" (ll. 89-90). The feather can be "just a feather, nothing but" (l. 23) but it can also be the "light". It can in the form of poetry produce philosophical, psychological and imaginative realities. That is Thoreau's approach to nature and it is Reaney's.

Remembering that the wind is poetry; that poetry is comprised of the metaphor, the metaphor being primarily comprised of some tangible reality the meaning of which can be extended; that in poetry a playing off of the primary elements of existence, life and death, will produce the ultra reality or perhaps eternity desired; and finally, that art is built upon previous art -- remembering these things, we can begin to come to grips with the various winds which seem to project the play forward and also to understand the final achievement of the "listeners" (who can include the audience as members).

The North Wind poem (Scene 2, p. 17) acts as a kind of invocation. Since we have discovered that the wind is poetry in Reaney's work, what we have here is not an invocation in as strict a sense as is usually seen, as, for instance, in Suit of Nettles, for the muse of poetry is not being called upon. What is being requested is that the audience recognize the power of poetry and call up their imaginations to become participating members in the production. The muse of the wind, then, is the imagination:

The branches wave in the wind!
 Listen to the wind and the patter of the sleet
 And the touch of the snow and the drum of the rain
 It lulls me awake. Keen keen awake.
 The wild, wild music wailed to me
 The drear moor stretches far away.
 Shall I pretend I'm the Goblin Hunter?
 Look, I can make the wind sound.
 Here's the sound the branches make.

Listen to the wind! Listen to the
 (Scene 2, pp. 17-18).

The wind moves the branches of trees. It carries with it sleet, snow and rain. Not only, though, does it carry with it the physical properties, but also the sounds of sleet, snow and rain: the "patter", the "touch" and the "drum". Both the action and the sounds of this weather can be mimed by the chorus who are guiding their audience, teaching them the art of the imagination. Interestingly, too, Nature does not lull to sleep, but rather "Keen, keen awake". That is the key to the awakening imagination and, indeed, to the creative power inherent in Nature as it can be invoked in man. Remember Thoreau sitting on his doorstep listening and discovering a world functioning outside the auspices of time. That to us is a world only to be imagined. The wind is music. The question is, "What is to be done with it?" Pretending seems to be a start. Perhaps one ought to consider becoming a "Goblin Hunter". As impracticable as this may seem to be in terms of where Reaney seems to be heading, I think it is an important and necessary point. This is, again, the world of the child's imagination and if the audience is going to make the leap to the following action, it is a useful reminder to have them leap into the imagination of the child first, and then move on.

We have, of course, already been reminded of and perhaps even identified with the child's imagination when we heard the opening lines of the chorus: "Once there were

four children who listened to the wind: Jenny, / Owen, Harriet, and Ann." (p. 17). This, too, is an oblique reference to the Brontë myth which is a recurring motif in the play. But that imaginative force of the children is clearly recognizable to any Canadian audience. It is the wind "that comes from Temiskaming/ Algoma, Patricia/ Down from the north over the wilderness". It is a reminder of present time and place, but also a reminder of the validity of that situation. The key to imagining begins where you are. James Reaney's own statement on this matter makes the point clear:

I don't believe you can really be world, or un-provincial or whatever until you've sunk your claws into a very locally coloured tree trunk and scratched your way through to universality.¹³

The imagination can only begin to work with the reality surrounding it. A child can only be a turkey when he has seen one put in the oven. Of course, in these local references to the wind we are again reminded of the malevolent force of nature in the Canadian imagination and indeed, the "howling mother" and "the black huntsman" follow quite appropriately from this.

Outside of the Brontë motif which reverberates throughout the play, there are two essential questions introduced in the North Wind poem. The audience is first being asked to awaken their imaginative processes and "dream it out". The wind forces the branch to tap at the window-

pane:

Tap tap tip! Tap tap tip!
 Scritch scritch tap tap tip!
 What are you writing on the frosty pane?
 What words do you scratch on my crystal brain?
 (Scene 2, p. 17).

In order to understand, we will be forced to create and provide answers. Actually, we will not quite be forced, because in the scenes to follow we shall be given clues as to how to function or at least to interpret as creative artists. We will, secondly, see how the wind can motivate the action until it climaxes in the final scene when Eternity is achieved.

We remember in "The Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker" that the investigation of existence is said to be the principal focus in poetry, through which "the other room" may be reached:

Eternity, that drum, sang the bird.
 Play on it with life and with death.
 (ll. 69-70)

It is through the investigation of the relationship between life and death that the realm outside of existence can be realized. Within the poem itself the "mother", giver of life, is paralleled with the "black huntsman", death. Moreover, stage directions are more specific in setting up the dichotomy:

taking the weathervane pole is like the Mace for
an inner parliament of the soul gathered with Death
Angels on the right and Life Angels on the left
 (Stage Directions, p. 18)

Setting aside the fact that we are running into the almost classic George Bernard Shaw situation of a play written for a reading audience or directing the director how to direct -- mind you, it may not be quite that situation, for Reaney certainly did direct the first production of this play and that places him legitimately within the director's category -- it is certainly clear that it is the playwright's intention to set up a life-death opposition. The identification of these images to the participating audience is revealed as the drama unfolds.

Poetry being the agent to lead man to another world, here it is the focal point around which the particular stress of the life-death dichotomy revolves. As usual, the chorus provides the key when it says:

She sat down below a thorn
 Fine flowers in the valley
 And there she has her sweet babe
 And the green leaves they grow rarely.

 Why do I hate that lone green dell
 Buried in moors and mountains wild?

I dream of moor and misty hill
 Where evening gathers, dark and chill.--
 (Scene 6, pp. 24-25)

The image of life with mother and child amongst flowers in a valley seems to be contained in the first sequence. An image of loneliness and perhaps death is suggested in the second passage where fear is expressed at the mountains wild and the dark cold gathering of night darkness. These are poems by Reaney and Emily Brontë and we here have the

selective artist at work as Reaney integrates Brontë themes into his own imaginative production.

Reaney's poem is the first sequence. It certainly alludes to the production of ancestors, that is, children, in its image of mother and child and this is a primary concern of the aging Devil Caresfoot: "Get married. Before I die I want to see grandchildren." (Scene 10, p. 31) It is an important preoccupation of Devil as he is anxious to see the line of Caresfoots continued:

You are my son, Piers. Touch the old tree by the haunted well. You will hold the yeoman's staff one day. Be like it -- of an oaken English heart and you will defy wind and weather as it has done. And there will always be Caresfoots beneath your branches at Caresfoot Court.

(Scene 5, p. 22)

In Devil's eyes there can never be death of the Caresfoots as long as lineage is preserved. That his life "hangs on a thread" is irrelevant. Survival of the malevolent forces of nature can be achieved through ancestry. That is life.

But Reaney's mother and child sit "below a thorn" in a valley where "the green leaves they grow rarely". There is the suggestion of evil forces working. The only indications of life are the mother and child for the foliage does not grow productively and what does, "a thorn", is, at least from the human point of view, an object of possible pain or injury. Like the rose which is beautiful only in conjunction with a thorn which can prick, the productive mother is

juxtaposed with a hostile environment. Pleasure and beauty do not occur without pain and injury. Life does not exist without death. Indeed, the mother here is a mother in the wilderness, perhaps even the Mother Nature of the Canadian imagination, which amounts to one and the same thing. The Canadian Mother Nature is often "the fierce howling mother", a female deity to be reckoned with, either passively or creatively. In any case, we have here a mother situated in a valley. But the valley does not seem to be a valley of life. Surrounded by lifelessness, she may be in "the valley of the shadow of death". Moreover, immediately following these poems, we find a mother who gives life only to take it away. Furthermore, she takes away life in order to marry which, according to Devil, was man's one route to achieving eternal existence on earth.

Indeed, Douglas shares this opinion. When he is told that Gerladine has killed their child, he responds: "You have murdered a part of me." (Scene 7, p. 26) He further curses her: "May you never bear another child." (Scene 7, p. 27) The lady has not understood the "Spirit of Power" within her and becomes a perverted creator. Rather than a productive mother, a creator in this world, she will only ever be able to contact another world through the black arts and so she will be haunted by that world. The ghost of her child rises from the world below and curses her:

"You'll be seven long years a wolf in the woods." (Scene 7, p. 29) Geraldine acknowledges this and officially takes on the role of the Hecate figure when she admits to searching for a deer into whose throat she will catch her teeth.

Geraldine cannot see a way to eternity neither in her role as mother nor as a woman possessed with unusual psychic talents. She kills her child and also uses her art destructively. Her counterpart in the outer play, Mrs. Taylor, appears, too, in this scene as both mother and artist:

OWEN:

Just a moment, Ann and Tom. Do you see who's coming in the lane. It's my mother.
He flies out into the audience to meet her near the back of the auditorium.
Mother!

MOTHER:

Owen -- should you be running so hard and so fast?

OWEN:

You've come at last.

MOTHER:

I saw the posters for the play. I couldn't miss that.

OWEN:

Where's your horse?

MOTHER:

I left him at the blacksmith's shop. Listen -- you can hear them working on his shoes.
Anvil distant tink tink from the chorus
My son.
Embrace.

OWEN:

Can you be Geraldine in the play, mother?

MOTHER:

Why of course I can. What part are you at?
(Scene 7, p. 27).

As a mother she embraces her son and being aware of his ill health expresses concern over his possible over-exertion. As a lover of art she acknowledges that she could not have missed a play. As an artist she readily accepts the invitation to accept a role in the production. But as Gerladine is the perverted mother and artist, Mrs. Taylor is the impotent mother and artist; for we are reminded by her own son (as Geraldine was reminded of her evil by the ghost of her own child) of her escapism from the responsibilities of mother and artist when he asks, as a loving son, about that which he knows to be most important to his mother: her horse. It is the only way to freedom that she knows. It physically removes her from the farm and the responsibilities of mother and wife which she has never been able to face. Her aesthetic sensibility can recognize the spirit of power which rests in the animal. She cannot, however, manage to convert that creativity actively into real life. Owen recognizes her creative instincts and hopes that by making her an active participant in his imaginary construct she will be able to reach another world where her weaknesses and fears will not be relevant so that she will be able to

function in the real one or at least not find it a necessary one from which she must escape. It is the other world which Mrs. Taylor fears: the world of death. It is a positive other world which Owen seeks.

This matter of another world is the point of the discussion in the four lines Reaney chooses to select from Emily Brontë's poems. The first couplet in its context within the Reaney play seems appropriate in that it expresses the characteristic human fear of nature and the need to deal with it. However, when examined in the light of the complete Brontë poem, it becomes even more relevant to the action of the play. The poem, Number 60 in Emily's collected poems,¹⁴ is a lament by Augusta Geraldine Almeda¹⁵ as a grown woman who realizes that she now hates that which she loved as a child. The country which was formerly a "priceless friend" (l. 13) to her is now an enemy. Fannie Ratchford cannot place the poem within the framework of the Gondal story pattern,¹⁶ but it fits well with Reaney's work. The second stanza of Emily's poem reads:

There are bones whitening there in the summer's heat,
But it is not for that, and none can tell;
None but one can the secret repeat
Why I hate that lone green dell.

(#60, ll. 5-8)

There are bones in the dell and a secret which one person knows. This is exactly Geraldine's position in the next scene. She has killed her child and does not care about her

act: "What does it matter?" (Scene 7, p. 26). She is much more concerned about her letters to Douglas which explain her action and which he refuses to return. He alone knows her secret: "I wonder if Attorney Eldred ever thought he'd be marrying a child murderess. Some day he might like to know." (Scene 7, p. 28) He alone can repeat it. The child GYPSY of the forest will learn to hate her childhood home where her child will haunt her and her lover scorn and harrass her.

But where a child can haunt a mother rising from the world of the dead, a child in the world of the living is capable of doing just the reverse for a lamenting parent. The second Emily Brontë fragment, "I dream of moor and misty hill / Where evening gathers, dark and chill", is again appropriate on its own terms within the context of the play. Malevolent forces seem to be present as daylight darkens, but they are dreamt of and dreaming is a creative process in this work. The dreamer in Emily's poem¹⁷ is a father lamenting the loss of "those that I have loved of old" (l. 21) for now that they lie dead among the mountains he believes that he will never see them again. But the child cannot weep for such souls, for the dead "are not there" (l. 39):

I know there is a blessed shore
 Opening its ports for me and mine;
 And, gazing Time's wide waters o'er,
 I weary for that land divine.
 (ll. 55-58)

There is another world available to the soul after death and this world is a surety to the girl. The father recognizes his child's wisdom and recognizes that there is an "eternal home -- / The steadfast, changeless shore" (ll. 69-70). Some kind of eternal existence is a reality. Concerns of this life need not be dwelled upon. Death is not a fearful thing. This is the precise situation of Owen and his mother as noted above. Owen is trying to teach his mother a way of dealing with the real world so that impotence and death are not frightening to her. It is his view that listening to the wind can do this.

Interestingly, it is the wind which has lead the father into meditation with his daughter in Emily's poem:

"The winter wind is loud and wild;
 Come close to me, my darling child!
 Forsake thy books and mateless play,
 And, while the night is closing grey,
 We'll talk its pensive hours away --
 (ll. 1-5).

It is also a "winter wind", probably from the north, and at this moment the imagination in Reaney's play is moving with the north wind. Similarly as the lonely Owen had occupied himself reading, this child's lonely play seems to involve reading books. Out of her reading, in conjunction with observation of nature around her, as well as the assimilation

of adult wisdom, she is able to envision a timeless existence outside of this world's torments. She becomes "wiser than thy sire" (l. 64). The child seems to have acquired the wisdom of age. Owen, the creative artist, is addressed by his father as "old man" (Scene 6, p. 23). That may be an ironical statement in that Owen appears to be in the position of an old man insofar as death seems to be imminent. But the immediacy of coming to terms with the other world in conjunction with this one is one of the motivating factors for the play and indeed examining the conflict of the two, as we have already seen, is for Reaney, the only way the artist can achieve creative perceptual concepts that span the problems of time and in fact move beyond time.

The North Wind has played life on death. It seems to qualify as "the North Wind of Hunger" in that most of the action seems to hint at the macabre or rather the dark side of life, the necessity of death. But there are hints of a possible transcendence of necessity. One of these possibilities ends the sequence. The marriage between Piers and Claudia is arranged: "I'll meet you in London. We can be married and I'll rent us lodgings in Battersea." (Scene 12, p. 36) Marriage has been put forth as one of the possible solutions, for it preserves lineage.

The South Wind bears the fruit of the seeds planted by the North Wind. Characters have been introduced both in

the inner and outer plays. The role of the chorus has been established as the audience learns to identify setting by associating props and mime and by listening to the various recitations of poetry, learning to apply every word spoken by the group to the action of the play. Indeed, Ann in a present day reflection gives explicit instructions:

CHORUS:

What are you thinking of, Miss Wilson?

ANN:

I was thinking of home and the games we children played there.

CHORUS:

What games?

ANN:

Dreaming it out. Imagining. My cousin and I used to call it "the world below" which we can enter whenever we are alone or -- listening to the wind. And in the world below -- why all is as we see it. Four children and four chairs. We make up stories about Douglas the Goblin Hunter and a kingdom called Caresfoot Court -- and an old tree -- by a haunted well.

(Scene 9, p. 29)

Dreaming it out, imagining, the entrance to another world and the necessity of listening to the wind in order to meet that world are clearly established as necessary tools in understanding the production. That comprehended, the audience can watch four chairs become "an avenue of trees" (Stage Directions Scene 3, p. 20) and see a step ladder as an old tree and a trap door become a haunted well. That being the case, the audience is ready to move with the

South Wind which exclusively develops Owen's imaginary construct, that is, the inner play only.

In the pattern established, the chorus introduces the South Wind influences with poetry. This particular poem seems to have no specific Brontë precedent although there have been, perhaps, some suggestions from the work of Emily. There initially seems to be a promise of goodness and beauty as the warm wind "Blows the snow away". The hills made brown by the deadening winter snow are gradually bared. Spring comes to make the brown fields green and with it there is a revival of the life and energy of birds and bees. (Whether or not the use of the bobolink and bees is intentional, that is, the birds and bees as symbols of growth and sexual fruition, is questionable, but if the connection is made, it is certainly an enjoyable pun to any parent dreaming it out.) In any case the first two stanzas of the South Wind poem unmistakably point to fruition. As the action proceeds we see clearly the results of the marriage of Claudia and Piers, but not without the scheming of the malevolent Lady Eldred. The dark works of the lady are suggested in the poem, particularly as the influences of the south wind move into summer maturity. "The woods are dark" although they have "new green leaves". The beautiful blossoms of spring die but "The small birds sing and sing and sing -- / A merry summer sound." (Scene 13, p. 36)

Beauty exists, but only in conjunction with darkness.

The fullness of summer reached, darkness emerges:

The bitter dark walnut trees
 Unfold their pale green flowers
 So bittersweet unfold unfold
 The secret waiting hours.

Though cloudshadows darkly fly
 My heart leaps within me
 The orchard bough is heavy ripe
 And the Harvest Moon I see.
 (Scene 13, p. 37)

The image of regeneration so important to Devil is suggested in the first two lines of this final section. Flowers unfold from the trees. Indeed, Devil uses the same kind of image to express his feelings about lineage:

You who have known me as Devil Caresfoot -- not without reason -- will soon know me no longer. I fall like one of the leaves from Caresfoot's Staff in autumn and I go to join the general mould, but the bare branches will spring afresh with green leaves. Because what I have to announce is my son's engagement to Miss Maria Lawry, the young lady on my right.
 (Scene 17, p. 40)

Green leaves will grow from the branches of the now apparently barren tree. Life will begin. However, life will not emerge without the reminder that leaves eventually fall and "join the general mould". In fact, that reminder is brought forth from Devil's own lips even more specifically:

Oh, it was here on this very table that my mother's coffin stood fifty years ago. I was standing where you are now when I wrenched off the lid to kiss her once more and last. That was the first of May, a long gone first of May. They threw branches of blackthorn blossom in upon her coffin.
 (Scene 19, p. 43)

It is death occurring in spring, and even more specifically, on May Day. The May Day celebration is "intended to secure a fresh portion of the fertilizing spirit of vegetation, and to preserve it throughout the year."¹⁸ Furthermore, this preservation of the "fertilizing spirit" extends as well to women and cattle.¹⁹ What we have expressed here, then, is a kind of perverted May Day celebration. As blossoms are thrown on the coffin of the mother, "flowers were thrown over it [the May Day tree]".²⁰ The flowers of the May Day celebration symbolize the power of the tree-spirit to bestow, to regenerate. The flowers strewn over the coffin perhaps symbolize a movement into another world rather than this one but it is certainly a juxtaposition when the usual symbols of life are used in death. Life is playing on death.

It is not wholly inappropriate, however, that Devil should be concerned with generation and regeneration. He is approaching death and his preoccupation with life is a normal psychological reaction to any man given his position. But his association with Caresfoot's Staff, the old oak tree and family symbol, connects him further with fertility. The rulers of "the oak-clad high lands of Greece . . . were expected to be a source of fertility to the land and fecundity to the cattle".²¹ The oak tree was worshipped all across Europe. Men "sacrificed to oak-trees

for good crops".²² Devil's association with that tree makes his concern a valid one indeed.

The South Wind poem does not, however, deal with oak trees. We see "bitter dark walnut trees" instead. Rather than verdant green produce we have "pale green flowers". The images are not wholly generative ones but rather have destructive undercurrents. The bittersweetness is becoming even more evident. Moreover, the repetition of "unfold" followed by "The secret waiting hours" reminds us of the secret marriage which ended the North Wind section and the secret engagement of Maria and Piers, the revelation of both to occur in following scenes. The unfolding does not refer only to the unfolding of plot. The plot is actually unfolded by the unfolding of three letters. Moreover, it is the lady of darkness who unfolds the initial letter and then causes the unfolding of the two following. Having discovered the secret marriage after unfolding a letter, Geraldine dictates one to Claudia:

A sincere friend warns Mrs. Piers Caresfoot that while she lives lonely in the great city elsewhere, her husband is deceiving her, and has become entangled with a young lady of her acquaintance.
Burn this semicolon wait and watch exclamation mark!

(Scene 16, p. 39)

On unfolding this, the bittersweet of her marriage will be revealed to Claudia so that she can do nothing more than spend the next hours waiting secretly. At the receipt of the next letter she will unfold her secret to Devil and

he will subsequently die. His heart will literally leap within him. But the death is not the final action in the section. It is opposed; for as "The orchard bough is heavy ripe", Claudia is "heavy with child" (Scene 18, p. 41) and indeed will produce life as the daughter of the moon, Angela, is born. It is truly a fruition and a Harvest Moon. Indeed Artemis was conceived of especially "as the yellow harvest moon".²³

That Harvest Moon allows us to make an oblique connection with the work of Emily Brontë. Emily's work in particular is filled with poems which begin under the influence of the wind. Generally the wind is described as being a force which can be heard. Reaney uses it as a force to be listened to. Although Emily is not as clear as he is about the symbolism of the wind, it is evident that in divining it as a starting point for many of the narrator's reflections in her work, she sees it as some kind of creative influence. Reaney, in his innovative style, enlarges upon and defines that influence and so creates art out of art. One of Emily's poems begins: "I know that tonight the wind is sighing, / The soft August wind, over forest and moor".²⁴ It is a lament by a victim enclosed in a dungeon. That person longs to see the Harvest Moon, to be free of the darkness and the "thoughts akin to madness" (l. 11). We see the utter misery of the victim who sees no

hope of freedom from friends:

I chide with my soul -- I bid it cherish
 The feelings it lived on when I was free,
 But shrinking it murmurs, "Let Memory perish,
 Forget, for thy friends have forgotten thee!"

Alas, I did think that they were weeping
 Such tears as I weep -- it is not so!

(ll. 13-18).

Claudia is such a lonely victim. For the sake of her husband she lives in secrecy and alone, only to discover that he has not been honest with her. She does feel the anguish and despair of the soul that Emily's speaker does, but as Emily's character is in the end able to accept her fate. Claudia is able to forgive:

Piers, I'm sorry I could not bear to see you before.
 But I wanted to get all anger at you out of my soul.
 And now -- I have. Piers, I loved you. Despite
 all I hope to see you again.

(Scene 21, p. 46)

More than that, she is able to transcend her victimization and become a "creative non-victim". She sees herself being "called to a happier world" and in the process is able to fulfill her role of a mother as she gives life to Angela. She is the true bearer of fruit in the section. Her produce is harvested. Indeed her produce will ultimately overcome the evil forces of Lady Eldred.

The ghost of Geraldine's child haunts her but in Claudia's child the ghost sees an end for Lady Eldred:

GHOST:

Don't you wish, mother dear, that you had yon
bonny girl baby that's just been born in your
arms?

GERALDINE:

Oh my baby! Cut out my tongue if I don't.
I've dug you up from your grave and flung
your bones about, but still you haunt me.
I wish her baby were dead and my baby was
alive.

GHOST:

Take my wishbone, Mother. Here it is by the
haunted well. Find it. Here. There.
Laughing. Sew up my bone into a doll. Give
it to her when she's grown up a bit. And if
she loves me and kisses me then I'll have rest
for I'll have found my true mother and I'll
not haunt you any more.

(Scene 20, pp. 45-46)

The lady of the world below is directed to make a kind of effigy doll enclosing in it the bone of her dead child. She is with this act surely a witch and yet it is her own destruction that she is commanding. Should the doll be loved and kissed her lost child will have found a mother and the destructive Lady Eldred incapable of using her powers creatively will no longer be needed even to be haunted. Lady Eldred's position here is similar to the speaker of poem 169 in Emily's collection.²⁵ The speaker here, is, in fact none other than Augusta Geraldine Almeda. The summer wind will move far away with Lord Alfred but Geraldine will move against it. Indeed she will commit a great wrong: "I know that I have done thee wrong -- / Have wronged both thee and heaven --" (ll. 9-10), will repent, but in vain

for "I who had the heart to sin / Will find a heart to bear." (ll. 19-20) Whatever act she can commit on earth she can bear on earth. It is only when confronted with the other world that Reaney's Geraldine regrets her act and quickly responds to the ghost's promise of freedom. She too recognizes a reality "far beyond earth's frenzied strife" (l. 21). Angela will truly become an "angel messenger".

The birth of Angela ends act one and the movement with the South Wind. It also ends the life-death dichotomy which has worked in this part of the play: the death of Devil, the decision of Piers to let him die, the resurrection of the child ghost, and the death of Claudia in conjunction with the final birth. It is a birth which gives hope to the future for it comes from another world and seems to be moving towards another one. The stage directions read:

"Perhaps also the four giant shadows of the four genii appear looking down at the Dawn they have made." (Scene 21, p. 46)

It is the birth of a new day and is enveloped by the genii who surrounded and protected the imaginative world created by the Brontë children.

The Night Wind²⁶ will preside over the next section as the four children will move in and out of the play they are creating, investigating further the life-death dichotomy. As in the North Wind section, there are no deaths or births

in the Night Wind section and it ends with a promise of marriage. That being the case, the life-death dichotomy occurs through the relationship of various recurrent images. It is again important that the audience is able to call upon its imaginative powers and connect the images. Again Reaney reminds us of the child's imaginative processes as we listen to the chorus accompany the skipping Harriet with "Green Gravel" and "Dear Eileen". These exclusively children's songs serve the double purpose of aiding the audience in the identification process and as preludes to later plot development. The comfortable reminiscences enchanted into the minds of the viewer by the child skipping and by the children singing will later fall heavily upon their minds when they see the very beautiful Angela pursued by Douglas. He has decided, "She's the girl I mean to marry" (Scene 27, p. 66). And she will be tricked into doing it in the same way as Eileen, for it will seem that her "true love is dead". The imagination of a child is the thing in this play. It is not just a game.

In his own "distinct sense of form", Reaney, following an established pattern also integrates a Brontë poem into the opening sequence of the Night Wind section:

Child of delight! With sunbright hair
 And seablue, seadeep eyes;
 Spirit of bliss, what brings thee here
 Beneath these sullen skies?

(Scene 22, p. 50).

In this address to a child of another world, a reference to Angela is certainly indicated, as we remember her being referred to by her dying mother as "An angel messenger". The foreboding contained in the children's rhymes preceding the passage is again suggested. The "Spirit of bliss" seems not to be an appropriate figure under "these sullen skies". Goodness and beauty are surrounded by sadness and moroseness, surely not complementary accompaniments. Indeed, the father who has vowed to protect her "pays not attention to her" (Scene 22, p. 51). Emily's child²⁷ denies any connection with heaven, but sees herself as "the image of light and gladness" (l. 13), bringing with her comfort and love. As a child Angela loves and comforts Rogue. When his father insists that he put his hand into a trap, she binds it up afterwards and when Arthur throws Rogue, she responds most indignantly and protectively: "Shame on you for hurting a poor boy who's not right in the head" (Scene 24, p. 57). She protects and comforts hurt animals, binding the paw of Arthur's dog after it has been injured in a trap and freeing the caged animals at the risk of death when she learns of their fate. As a woman she will bring love to Arthur.

That love will prompt the night wind to speak in the form of a stanza from Emily's poem "The Night-Wind":²⁸

Have we not been from childhood friends?
 Have I not loved thee long?
 As long as thou hast loved the night
 Whose silence wakes my song.

(Scene 29, p. 68)

It would first appear to refer to Angela and Arthur for they have certainly known each other since childhood, though they can attest to a rather stormy childhood relationship. That relationship now, though, is a source of amusement to them. (Scene 27, p. 66) However, the stanza is shortly followed by the discovery of another childhood friendship:

ANGELA:

D.C. and G.A. Douglas Caresfoot and Geraldine -- her maiden names is Almeda. Yes, when they were very young Martha says they were in love.

(Scene 30, p. 68)

As the lady of darkness Geraldine would certainly love the night. Her relationship with Douglas might then be referred to in the poem. Indeed, the next scene involves Douglas and Geraldine. But their song is one of evil and destruction. We are reminded of Geraldine's murder of their child. Their childhood love has been completely perverted. It is now a source of destruction:

GERALDINE:

I pity her? I hate her. Look you -- I suffer.
 She shall suffer more. Her love will be fouled
 and her life made a shambles, such a shambles
 that she will cease to believe there is a God.
 In return I shall give her -- YOU.

(Scene 31, p. 70)

Their love breeds hate. They will destroy Angela's life and love. Their song is not the creative vision that can be attained in poetry. As "Douglas looks in at a window the

prop girl holds up" (Stage Directions, Scene 27, p. 65), he perverts the imaginary process which the window has come to symbolize. His is a destructive vision. All beauty he sees he wishes to possess entirely as his own property. It is Angela he has seen through the window, and Angela he means to marry, even if it means destroying her. Moreover, it would almost seem that his destructive use of creativity is in keeping with the poetic vision of Owen, for in drawing straws it is determined that "We'll end the play with her death" (Scene 32, p. 71).

But the Night Wind poem is repeated, this time with more stanzas from Emily's poem and it is labelled as the "ETERNITY CHORUS". An everlasting vision would not seem to be a destructive one. That we can look on this poem as representing some kind of poetic statement whose truth is derived in the wind is validated by Charlotte Brontë's comment about the poem:

Here again is the same mind in converse with a like abstraction. "The Night-Wind", breathing through an open window, has visited an ear which discerned the language in its whispers.²⁹

The listener hears and understands what it is that the wind has to say. That is the role of the audience in the play, in part. Reaney adds to that when he expects the audience to not only "converse" but be moved with it in the process.

The first stanza of the Eternity Chorus as excerpted from Emily's poem describes the process exactly:

I sat in silent musing,
 The soft wind waved my hair,
 "O come" it sighed so sweetly,
 I'll win thee 'gainst thy will.
 (Scene 33, p. 72)

The wind will prevail. It will take the listener with it, perhaps to another world. Angela is a messenger from another world and representative of a mythological one as the lady of the light of the moon. Emily's Night-Wind speaks on a night when "A cloudless moon shone through / Our open parlour window" (ll. 2-3). Under the influence of a clear moon it would then seem probable that "childhood friends" may not be the dark couple, Douglas and Geraldine, but rather the young and innocent Angela and Arthur.

It is in the following scene that the couple make their declaration of love to each other and Angela gives Arthur her family ring:

ANGELA:

In my mother's family it has been a very old ring. That is the Star of Love in the deep blue of the evening sky.

ARTHUR:

What does that strange writing say underneath?

ANGELA:

It means FOREVER. Be true to me, Arthur. Keep the ring and give it back to me when we meet again.

ARTHUR:

I promise, Angela. My life, my love.
 (Scene 34, p. 75)

The ring carries the promise of love and eternity. Like the wheel which enchanted itself into the minds of the audience,

the ring is a mandala. It is a symbol of the "wholeness of self" as previously discussed and holds the promise of creativity. The other world as perceived by Angela and Arthur is surely one of creative energy.

But we are in this same scene still reminded of the destructive other world:

ARTHUR:

Angela -- Such a funny thing with your father. When I dropped in again to say goodbye he was sitting in his chair staring at some shadows on the wall outside his window. He didn't move. He couldn't even see me.

ANGELA:

I know. I've seen him in that state. Father has ghosts in his life you know.

(Scene 34, p. 74)

The world of ghosts, of evil and darkness, exists simultaneously with a world of eternal recreation, just as "childhood firends" can be the evil couple who destroy or the couple of goodness who create. The section ends on this note of positive transcendence of reality but the macabre background out of which it arises tends to negate the probability of its power. The destructive force in death still opposes the creative energy in life.

The "East Wind of Hate" (Scene 46, p. 105) brings to a climax the power of evil as Douglas, the Black Huntsman, Piers, the Judas figure and Lady Eldred, the lady of darkness, work together to overcome the angel messenger. It is a bitter cold wind and the chorus introduces it:

All hushed and still within the house;
 Without -- all wind and driving rain;
 But something whispers to my mind,
 Through rain and through the wailing wind . . .

The wind that comes from across the sea!
 The fierce howling mother and the rain her doll!
 Sss Sss Sssss Gsss Gsss Gssss

(Scene 35, p. 76).

In a physical setting where it would appear that the speaker has successfully garrisoned himself from the brutal nature without, his mind still finds itself receptive to the suggestions evident in the external environment. Even as Mr. and Mrs. Bentley in As For Me and My House become sensitive to the power of the wind and as the narrator of Emily's Night-Wind poem leans a receptive ear to the whispers of the wind, so here again the wind and rain become messengers bearing with them truths to be reckoned with. This wind comes from "across the sea" where Arthur, Lady Eldred and Lord Eldred are situated. The "fierce howling mother" here carries the double connotations of malevolent nature and the perverted mother, Lady Eldred. This is even more evident when one considers the relationship with the accompanying doll. Not only the rain is implied, but also the effigy doll which Angela possesses. The implications hinted at are reinforced by the malevolent hissing sounds which take the listeners into the following persecution scene where Angela reveals the harrassment of the three evil figures.

With assistance from Emily Brontë's poem, the first four lines of which comprise the first four lines of the chorus, we can see quite clearly the implications of the prophecy opening the East Wind section. Emily's poem is completed in this way:

Never again.
 Never again? Why not again?
 Memory has power as real as thine. ³⁰

The wind coming from across the sea brings the message "Never again". Across the sea is where Arthur is situated. The preceding scene ended with an eternal vow of love between Angela and Arthur. It would seem that the promise is never going to be realized or, perhaps, the lover is never going to be seen again. The final statement, however, is one which assures that the love cannot be lost as long as memory exists. As the truths of the wind are eternal truths, so are the truths of the mind.

The message which comes with the wind in the chorus is the same message which Lady Eldred brings to Angela:

GERALDINE:

Ah! Angela, I find it amusing to hear you talk so and then to think that within seven months you will certainly be Mrs. Douglas Caresfoot.

ANGELA:

Never! What makes you say such horrible things?

GERALDINE:

Because I reflect that Douglas Caresfoot has made up his mind to marry you, and I have made up mine to help him to do so, and that your will, strong as it certainly is, is, as compared with our united wills, what a dead leaf is to

This strong East Wind. Angela, the leaf cannot travel against the wind, it MUST go with it, and you MUST marry Douglas Caresfoot. You will as certainly come to the altar rails with him as you will to your deathbed. It is written in your face. Goodbye, Angela.
 (Scene 35, p. 78)

The promise will never be realized. The introductory poem implies that the mind can compete with the truths of nature. Lady Eldred compares the strength of one strong mind against two united ones to a dead leaf which "cannot travel against the wind". It is, however, a comparison between nature and the mind which Lady Eldred uses. It is not a reciprocal arrangement. There is no unity with nature and the mind. Reaney's key to understanding is listening to the wind. Lady Eldred cannot make that relationship. If we are understanding the chorus correctly, Angela is capable of comprehending what nature has to say. However, we are still not given any clue as to whether or not that sensitivity will ultimately prevail; for, given the decision that Owen is going to have her die in the end and the cold assurance with which Lady Eldred makes her claim, along with the chorus's initial prophecy, it would seem that Angela's fears as expressed to Gleneden are realistic.

Her vulnerability in being separated from Arthur is underlined in the next chorus sequence, again derived from one of Emily Brontë's Gondal poems. The sequence also takes us to the setting of the next scene in the suggestion

of the "southern sea" and "tropic prairies". This too is the scene where Arthur gives up the ring symbolic of eternal love to the malevolent Lady Eldred. That action will result in the mock death of Arthur as presented to Angela. That she could have been taken in by such a ploy is indicated, as mentioned above, when the sequence apparently chosen for nothing more than expression of setting is examined in context. The speaker, situated in England, observes that "A drearier scene on winter morn / Was never stretched below."³¹ In reflecting on this situation he thinks of his "dear comrades" in the comfortable tropic warmth of "Ula's bowers". The final stanza demonstrates the hearty sadness he feels at the separation:

Home to our souls whose wearying sighs
Lament their absence drear,
And feel how bright even winter skies
Would shine if they were here!
(ll. 39-42).

Angela, too, feels that wretchedness as her lover enjoys the warmth of Madeira and her "hands are cold with the east wind that blows so bitterly" (Scene 35, p. 76). Were he in England, she would have nothing to fear. It is not Arthur who comes with the East Wind, but rather Geraldine. Her role is not to brighten winter skies, but rather to act in darkness, indeed, to darken the winter skies.

The East Wind moves us through the mock death and burial bringing us to yet another Brontë poem:

The old Church tower and garden wall
 Are black with autumn rain,
 And dreary winds foreboding call
 The darkness down again.³²

It can be looked at in retrospect, that is, in terms of the preceding scene where, considering the mock death and burial of Rogue, "the Eldreds and Douglas drink to their success and laugh as the clock strikes twelve." (Stage Direction, Scene 40, p. 87) The winds brought the Eldreds home and in the darkness of midnight they, along with Douglas, use their evil powers to trick Angela and place a body in "the Lawry plot", presumably near the church. Of course it must be remembered that this is a mock death and the body is actually raised again from the grave to life.

This suggestion of resurrection is contained in the completing portion of Emily's poem:

I watched how evening took the place
 Of glad and glorious day;
 I watched a deeper gloom efface
 The evening's lingering ray.

And as I gazed on the cheerless sky
 Sad thoughts rose in my mind. . . .
 (ll. 5-10)

If we look on day as being the daytime of life, evening as the period when the fullness of life achieved with the day fading, and the "deeper gloom" as an indication of night and, as such, darkness and death, we then find the fragment connecting well with the problem of existence around which discussion Reaney moves his work forward in an effort to

step outside of time. As the speaker watches the movement from daylight to darkness his contemplations bring "sad thoughts". But they are not expressed, never fully realized. The suggestion is, then, that there is not any one single alternative. Darkness is not accepted entirely. Only vague thoughts arise. These thoughts are left open. There seems to be a possibility for transcendence of darkness.

As Rogue, with the assistance of the black arts, undergoes a death and resurrection, Owen the artist in the middle of the night experiences a similar incident. At the interjection of the Victorian melodrama into the 1930 period the audience is reminded of the very close relationship between the real world of the artist and that of his work. As Angela struggles with the forces of evil and darkness, the creative artist struggles with the concerns of his play but also with the actual fulfillment of the work he is trying to produce. Owen "recovers from his fit" (Stage Directions, Scene 41, p. 88) but still risks extinction of his art:

OWEN:

You're not going to say that I can't put on my play tomorrow.

DOCTOR:

For a moment -- yes. But -- as I said before, Owen. Live.

(Scene 41, p. 88)

The struggle between life and death is not only restricted to physical life and death but also includes the actual struggle involved in the creation of a work of art, the threatened extinction of the artist. The doctor tells Owen to live as, he explains, "I said before"; what he also said before was to "Dream it out" (Scene 6, p. 24). Even the doctor, as the individual most acquainted with the physical arts, the confrontation of life with death, shows confidence in the power of an imaginary creative work. Just as Emily's poem directly preceding this scene hints at a possible transcendence of darkness, the doctor conceives of some alternate future and the artist moves towards it.

What he seems to be moving towards, however, is destruction; for, if we can parallel the struggles of Angela and Owen, then Owen must be moving towards inevitable destruction. The chorus in the recitation of the next excerpted Brontë poem (p. 90) indicates the desolation of Angela and her susceptibility to the plottings of Geraldine and Douglas. But more than that Emily's poem from which the lines are taken ends:

Alas! as lightning withers
The young and aged tree,
Both they and I shall fall beneath
The fate we cannot flee.³³

Angela's fate is inevitable, as inevitable as Lady Eldred's prediction in Scene 35. Indeed, she does marry Douglas in

the following scene. She must move with the East Wind which has not only carried home the Eldreds to complete their plottings, but which has in the artist's perception moved the play towards its climax. The East Wind must be listened to from the artist's, the imagining audience's and the character's point of view.

A quick movement into present time reminds the audience of their responsibility:

ANN: crossing

You've no idea of what marvellous times we had playing out there when we were children. It was an old farmhouse at the end of a dark lane all shadowy. We used to put on plays in a disused place the family called the West Room. It was our cousin who led us in dreaming it out.

CHORUS: an individual as if in a class at a school
Ann is teaching

Did this cousin die, Miss?

but we do hear her answer as the thunder of
the storm begins

(Scene 43, p. 94)

As the four cousins imagined, the audience must be "dreaming it out". At this point they, as participatory members in the imaginative process, ask, along with Ann's student, if Owen died. The Stage Directions state that the question is answered, but the script provides none. Either the director decides on a response or the audience, finally being able to "listen to the wind", provides their own answer. They can hear an answer. Or, perhaps, the question is unanswered for we are quickly moved into a storm during which most of the central images of the play converge. In

their playing off of each other and in their identification an answer may be revealed.

The great malevolent Mother Nature brings forth all her fury with a storm. Weather vanes turn, and smoke pours forth on the stage. The chorus becomes "Great armies of branches waving, creaking and groaning." (Stage Directions, Scene 43, p. 94) The image of the deer victim runs through the forest of waving branches, clearly running from the forces which the East Wind is bringing forth. There are whizzing and humming noises. And a branch continually scratches on a windowpane. The tumult culminates with an incantation by the chorus. All the world is warned of the power of the force which has moved upon it. Man is advised, "Lock up your doors and pen your flocks". He must garrison himself from the forces without. The huntsman with his hounds is galloping. He is hungry. "He will not be denied." The huntsman we have identified as Douglas; the hounds are associated with Piers. The third evil character is the Hecate figure, Lady Eldred, and has been associated with Hell and the world below. She too is included in the malevolent force of the storm for "Hell itself comes nigh". The three destructive characters "will not be denied". "Have you blood for us and any bones?" is their cry. They have succeeded in seducing the innocent Angela. What is it that they desire more? The

incantation ends with the repetition of "Over the hills and under the sky" four times. It undoubtedly builds in volume as do the hissing and groaning and scratching. Then there is silence.

Angela is seated combing her hair. The wedding ring symbolic of eternal love is lying on her dresser rather than being worn on her finger. Her comb, probably the comb of her mother which bears the star leading to eternity on its shaft, is removed from her hand. Indeed, her position seems to be one leading towards inevitable destruction. She seems to be alone in the hands of the black huntsman of death, Douglas from whom she cannot escape. All symbols of ultimate unity and eternity are disassociated from her.

But, during the storm two things happen which suggest some kind of redemption for Angela. The first image of the play recurs. As formerly noted, the window pane breaks. The imagination is free to create, to alter whatever has appeared to be inevitable. Furthermore, during the storm "Caresfoot Staff is blown down." (Stage Directions, Scene 43, p. 95). The chosen Caresfoot symbol, a symbol of fertility, is destroyed. The suggestion is that there will be no further Caresfoot progeny. Lineage has ended. Indeed, what is left for the huntsman to devour in the preceding poem is the "last sheaf in the field" (Scene 43, p. 95, l. 26). The last sheaf was a symbol which

exerted influence over vegetation and animals, but as the May tree exerted influence over women as well, so does the last sheaf. It was the belief "that the woman who binds the last sheaf will have a child next year".³⁴ The huntsman in accepting the last sheaf is then removing a fertility symbol and the one symbol which the Caresfoots saw as a way to eternity. It is an indication that Angela will not bear a Caresfoot but, even more, neither Douglas nor Piers will father one. How that is determined depends upon how the freed imagination chooses to work. Angela may or may not be included in the suggested end for the Caresfoots.

Owen in the following bottle scene acknowledges that there may be some eternal existence after death. He then looks through colours, another symbol of the imagination for Reaney, at the stage where his play will be performed. He watches as the truth is revealed to Angela. He sees Lady Eldred's prophecy realized: "there is something written on your face that I will some day sign with my foot!" (Scene 43, p. 93). Douglas has been toppled into the well by Keeper.

He hangs on the edge of the well, but Lady Eldred runs up and standing on the edge of the well stamps on his hands until he lets go and howling falls with Keeper deep into the earth.

(Scene 46, p. 103)

One Caresfoot is dead. Angela apparently is driven to madness. Piers, haunted by another world, discovers that it is "The awful time" (Scene 46, p. 104, l. 7) for him. He is killed by his own dogs. The elder Caresfoots are killed, then, not Angela -- or at least not yet. Her destruction in death has not yet become inevitable. Lady Eldred, who has slaked her "thirst in the wine cellars of their [the Caresfoots] hearts and pantries of their bones" (Scene 46, p. 106), drinks with her wine a vial containing the fruit of her art which she hopes will take her beyond "the stars who look down upon" her. As she falls to the stage she rises again as Mrs. Taylor. The impotent mother then promises to stay but, Owen asleep, she rides away³⁵ on her horse, for she "can't stand sickness and death" (Scene 47, p. 108). Owen so far has been unsuccessful in showing his mother an alternate route to accepting reality.

But he does see an alternate to the ending of the play. We discover that he has ended the play "with Angela dying and Geraldine lingering on" (Scene 47, p. 108). With the help of the West Wind he can change what seemed to be the inevitable. Angela regains her senses. She calls to the West Wind to save her: "Oh come and help me free the prisoner, the river frozen in the jail of winter." (Scene 48, p. 109). It is a call to be released from the

tortures of her life to eternity:

A messenger of Hope, comes every night to me,
 And offers for short life, eternal liberty.
 He comes with western winds, with evening's wandering airs,
 With that clear dusk of heaven that brings the thickest stars;
 Winds take a pensive tone, and stars a tender fire,
 And visions rise and change which kill me with desire --
 (Scene 48, p. 110).

The same call is found in Emily Brontë's "Julian M. and A.G. Rochelle".³⁶ In the dead of winter a fair haired lady is held prisoner in a dungeon. A former playmate owns that cell and has placed her in captivity. The lady, however, retains her composure in all the hardship as she sees a vision of eternity beyond the confines of existence within her grasp in death: "If it but herald Death, the vision is divine." (l. 92). Julian, her former playmate, visits the dungeon and finds her. He frees the lady with the "angel face" (l. 128) for she is "too young to die by such a bitter fate" (l. 124). His alternative to death is "never-doubting love, unswerving constancy" (l. 151), which he ultimately gains in return from Rochelle.

Angela, as the angel messenger, also bears an "angel face". She too sees her soul captive and asks for eternal release in death. But Owen does not wish her to die and it is he who has placed her in prison. In Arthur's love she will attain the freedom that eternity promises. The shadows of the four genii will protect her. More than that, however, she will destroy her counterpart, the lady

of darkness, with love. Her soul will be freed in life, by the light of the moon. Lady Eldred's will be freed in death to the underworld from which her arts derive.

For at last someone good enough has been found to kiss the rag doll you made of my bones -- loving enough to lick the sores of Lazarus and gentle enough to weep for the scorpion. Farewell, I have found at last my true mother. The West Wind blows and lights the Evening Star.

(Scene 48, p. 110)

The ghost of her child recognizes the eternal existence in life which Angela can attain, the creative power within her. She, like Christ, can restore life to Lazarus. Like Isis she can remove the poison of the scorpion from the heart of a child and give it life again.³⁷

There is no Stage Direction in Scene 48 to indicate who plays the part of Lady Eldred. Mrs. Taylor, having already left the farm would not be able to play the part unless she has returned. Since we are not told that anyone else plays the role, we must assume that Owen's mother does return. That would indicate that Owen's method of dealing with the problem of life and death has become a possible alternative for his mother. Indeed the four cousins are able to transcend life.

The stage directions read:

The three girl cousins and Owen walk to the front of the stage with four small chairs in their hands which they set down in front of them. Huge shadows are cast behind them. They are free -- in Eternity -- they will never taste death again.

(Scene 49, p. 112)

In listening to the wind they have created life out of what seemed to be inevitable death. As they can bring Angela back to life, perhaps they can restore the same to Owen, even bring his mother back to the family. Or perhaps these real life concerns have no relevance at all. It is the imaginative process which transcends life that is to be believed. It is the ultimate reality.

In their benedictory poem derived from Charlotte Brontë,³⁸ we find the answer. The first two stanzas exclaiming the creativity of the children ends by noting that they "are now grown up to ripened age" and asks whether or not their creative works have now withered, lost all meaning, or, perhaps, implying that the creative energy which inspired the children is now forever lost. The first two stanzas being Charlotte's as well, Reaney then departs from the Brontë manuscript. Charlotte continues:

Are they blighted, failed and faded,
 Are they mouldered back to clay?
 For life is darkly shaded,
 And its joys fleet fast away!
 (ll. 9-12)

Charlotte does not answer her question but the implication is clear. She does not see the creative imagination transcending childhood. They were fast fleeting joys.

Reaney, on the other hand, makes no such statement. The mustard seed brings forth fruit, "the almond wand / Has

touched eternity" (ll. 11-12). Indeed, when the sceptic sees no longer "a spring [dug] in infancy / of water pure and fair" (ll. 3-4), he is reprimanded soundly as oceans and fleets are claimed to be in sight. Here it is clear that the creative imaginations of the children are real and alive, even valid. As they listen to the wind, the audience will follow. In doing so they too play life on death and in the end can achieve eternity.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER TWO

¹Francis Bacon, The New Organon, in Francis Bacon A Selection of His Works, ed. Sidney Warhaft (Toronto: MacMillan, 1965), III, 331.

²Charles Darwin, The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs (London: Smith, Elder, 1842), p. 12.

³Henry Thoreau, Walden, introduction by E. W. Teale (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1946), p. xi.

⁴Walden, pp. 92-93.

⁵The New Organon, LXXIII, 351.

⁶Sinclair Ross, As For Me and My House (New York: Regnal and Hitchcock, 1941), pp. 128-129.

⁷As For Me and My House, p. 295.

⁸Dylan Thomas, Under Milkwood, screenplay by Andrew Sinclair (London: Villiers, 1972), p. 14.

⁹Lee, James Reaney, p. 122.

¹⁰Butterfly on Rock, p. 19.

¹¹Butterfly on Rock, p. 18.

¹²Wallace Stevens, "Sea Surface Full of Clouds" in Poems by Wallace Stevens, selected and with an introduction by Samuel French Morse (New York: Vintage, 1959), p. 53.

¹³James Reaney, "Editorial" in Alphabet, no. 4, p. 3.

¹⁴Emily Jane Brontë, Poem number 60 in The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë, ed. C. W. Hatfield (New York:

Columbia University Press, 1941), pp. 69-70. All quotations from Emily's poems other than those found in the text of the play are taken from this edition.

¹⁵Notice that the Gondal heroine is Geraldine Almeda, the name Reaney chooses for Lady Eldred before her marriage. This will be dealt with at length later.

¹⁶Ratchford, in Complete Poems of E.J.B., p. 19.

¹⁷Emily Brontë, Number 177, "I.M. to I.G." in Complete Poems, pp. 209-211.

¹⁸Sir James Frazer, The Golden Bough, abridged edition (London: Macmillan, 1963), p. 124.

¹⁹Frazer, p. 125.

²⁰Frazer, p. 121.

²¹Frazer, pp. 159-160.

²²Frazer, p. 161.

²³Frazer, p. 141.

²⁴Emily Brontë, Number 189, "M.A. Written on the Dungeon wall -- N.C." in Complete Poems, pp. 234-236, ll. 1-2.

²⁵Emily Brontë, Number 169, "A.G.A. to A.S.", in Complete Poems, pp. 197-198.

²⁶Although the chorus does not introduce the Night Wind as in the earlier sections, there seems to be textual evidence to support my division here. First, at the end of Act 1 Owen asks "What winds have we been listening to?" and is told the North and South. He seems to want a break after these. Second, the chorus's recitation in Scene 22 is derived from one of Emily Brontë's poems (#187) in which a child observes that "the dark night is closing". Third, when the inner play begins (Scene 23) Angela is concerned about the wind blowing and her first line places the time as "late at night".

²⁷Emily Brontë, Number 187, in Complete Poems, p. 230.

²⁸Emily Brontë, Number 140, "The Night Wind", in Complete Poems, pp. 146-147.

²⁹Charlotte Brontë, in Complete Poems, p. 147.

³⁰Emily Brontë, Number 45, in Complete Poems, p. 64, ll. 5-7.

³¹Emily Brontë, Number 166, "M.G. for the U.S.", in Complete Poems, pp. 193-194, ll. 3-4.

³²Emily Brontë, Number 31, in Complete Poems, p. 52, ll. 1-4.

³³Emily Brontë, Number 101, in Complete Poems, pp. 107-108, ll. 29-32.

³⁴Frazer, p. 410.

³⁵I am assuming that Stage Directions, p. 108, are incorrect. Mrs. Taylor rides away, not Geraldine as printed. If Reaney means Geraldine, we then already have an alternate ending: Geraldine riding with the horseman of death and Mrs. Taylor staying with her son.

³⁶Emily Brontë, Number 190, "Julian M. and A.G. Rochelle", in Complete Poems, pp. 236-241, ll. 67-72.

³⁷Frazer, p. 364.

³⁸Charlotte Brontë, "Retrospection", in The Complete Poems of Charlotte Brontë, ed. Clement Shorter (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923), pp. 193-194.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PATTERN OF LISTEN TO THE WIND

We have discovered that Listen to the Wind moves forward by means of image patterns, both visual and metaphorical, that the play seems to be centered around the problem of existence and furthermore, that this problem is explored by playing on life with death, good with evil, creation with destruction. How then, does the story or plot fit into this framework? Furthermore, how do we account for the sudden emergence of a modern dramatist whose statement seems to be that salvation is found in the creative imagination?

Luigi Pirandello, perhaps one of the greatest influences on modern drama today, questioned the precept that art was a series of ideas. Art evolves from within itself:

A play doesn't create people, people create a play. So first of all one must have people -- free, living, active people. With them and through them the idea of the play will be born, its shape and destiny enclosed in this first seed; in every seed there already quivers a living being, the oak and all its branches already exist in an acorn.¹

It is no accident that he uses the previously identified symbol of fertility, the oak tree, to illustrate the conception of the evolutionary process of a play. That process is surely a fruition. Rather than developing around an

idea, a play begins with an idea, a conception, and moves outwards from it to full maturity. It develops roots, a sturdy trunk, moves out with its branches, turns pale leaves to bright green and ultimately produces fruit. All these things are dependent upon the first seed of an idea, not upon some fully developed philosophy -- as Brecht would have it. James Reaney must surely agree with Pirandello.

Reaney describes his view of how Twelfth Night was created:

I have the feeling that Twelfth Night started with thinking about a clown with a little drum: and that's the way I would direct it. Gather the cast around, listen to the drum, improvise along the main lines of the Shakespeare plot and then start adding the text.²

This is a revolutionary view of the evolution of that play but it agrees with Pirandello's approach and is a poet's view. Now, I am not, at this stage, planning to compare Reaney to Shakespeare, but it is interesting to consider the fact that both are poets. It is also interesting that as Reaney worked with a particular cast for Listen to the Wind, so too did Shakespeare for his plays, and, moreover, both poet-playwrights are known to have been involved in re-writing during rehearsals. Neither play appeared in print in final form until after production, after "free, living, active people" had worked with the initial conception and developed it.

Again it seems that we are at odds with Northrop Frye's theory of art, that is, the building of art upon art. This is not quite the case. Nothing can be imagined without prior experience. Indeed, drama itself has evolved from very primitive religious folk festivals. As we see it today it is dependent upon thousands of years of change and adaptation, that is, it is art or sense of form. Neither Reaney nor Pirandello is quibbling about drama as an art form. Both are sure it exists. What they perceive, though, is that the imaginative process upon which a play is based is being subterfuged by philosophy. Pirandello expresses the problem well:

Today's playwright, if he sees anything at all, sees a certain fact or situation; he has or thinks he has an original observation on some feeling or event, and believes that a play can be drawn from it. For him a play is built like a logical chain of reasoning, to which a few skilfully selected frills can be applied. Once the situation is established, he turns to the characters and looks for those most suited to illustrate it. Will three or five or ten be needed? Which stock types can we draw upon this time? How will the necessary dialogue be divided between them? What actors are available? Can the parts be tailored to their specific gifts?³

There is no question here of a continuing imaginative process, of a fluid relationship between actor, director and playwright, of an interplay of imagination. Instead of a play growing out of "an original observation on some feeling or event", the process is reversed. The dramatist decides what he wants to say and how he wants to say it and then tailors this to

suit a dramatic production. The imaginative process is almost non-existent in contradictionary, what is supposed to be an imaginative work.

Jerzy Grotowski, in an effort "to define what is distinctively theatre, what separates this activity from other categories of performance and spectacle",⁴ returns to the roots of the art. Indeed, as a compensation for the loss of religion in society today he endeavours to create a "secular sacrum in the theatre."⁵ He works with only two components, the actors and the audience. Text is unnecessary. Essentially Grotowski is attempting to accomplish for man a confrontation with the self. He does this by immersing the audience into the physical setting of the play, in complete proximity with the actors who achieve an "act of the soul"⁶ almost entirely with body language, possibly including chanting of combinations of familiar doctrinal poetry and prose. The primitivism, the ritualism, the religious fervor almost unfailingly cause a spontaneous emotional response in the audience. While this kind of thing is an interesting experience to contemporary man, it is difficult to ascertain how and to what end such behaviour can fit in to a highly structured society. Thousands of years have been spent teaching man where, when, why and how emotions are to be dealt with. At this stage uncontrolled, spontaneous emotional responses (is this

catharsis?) could perhaps be deemed destructive (witness the success of Hitler) rather than constructive.

There is something about the primitive theatre, however, which Grotowski does perceive and although he tends to exploit it, is still valid. Grotowski disposes of lighting, setting (although not always), costumes (as much as possible) and script. What the audience does encounter is a visual and sensual spectacle. Grotowski tends to be more interested in the sensual than the visual, but he is certainly aware of the power of the latter. The productive use of sight in modern theatre has been one of its important innovations. E. Gordon Craig explains it this way:

The first dramatist understood what the modern dramatist does not yet understand. He knew that when he and his fellows appeared in front of them the audience would be more eager to see what he would do than to hear what he might say. He knew that the eye is more swiftly and powerfully appealed to than any other sense; that it is without question the keenest sense of the body of man. The first thing which he encountered on appearing before them was many pairs of eyes, eager and hungry. Even the men and women sitting so far from him that they would not always be able to hear what he might say seemed quite close to him by reason of the piercing keenness of their questioning eyes. To these, and all, he spoke either in poetry or prose, but always in action: in poetic action which is dance, or in prose action which is gesture.⁷

Admittedly, Mr. Craig is a designer and perhaps might then be accused of some prejudice here, but I think that it is a very real consideration to suggest that people come to the theatre to see a play. Nor do I think that Reaney is unaware

of this reality in his approach to theatre. If you remember, the entire first chapter of this paper is concerned with the visual images, indeed with what Reaney himself calls images, and, moreover, one of these seemed to "sum up the play".

One of the major concerns of modern dramatists has been to deal with "the audience's loss of imaginative power, its inclination not so much to share in a dramatic experience as to have it served up as a diversion."⁸ This has, of course, been one of the major achievements of the absurdists. The play itself becomes a poetic metaphor. Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot is a "poetic image of the act of waiting itself."⁹ The audience that is receptive to this kind of work is then capable of receiving a poetic dramatist, one who integrates words with action and visual experience. Ionesco is sceptical about the probability of such a one appearing:

I do not say that a dramatic poet cannot appear, a great naïve poet; but, for the moment, I do not see him on the horizon. I mean a lucid naïveté, springing from the profound sources of being, revealing them, revealing them to ourselves, restoring to us our naïveté, our secret being.¹⁰

The "sources of being" are the concerns of the great dramatic poet. Christopher Fry describes these as "the circumstances, the circumstances being the contention of death with life, which is to say evil with good, which is to say desolation with delight."¹¹ These are the concerns of the child-dramatist Owen, both in his real life and in the play. Given

his youth and rather weighty concerns about existence, do we then have a "naïve poet"? Given Reaney's theory of poetry as the playing of life on death, do we somewhere in Listen to the Wind have the "great naïve poet" involved?

The naïveté of Owen is most problematical. Given his physical situation, his interest in the life-death continuum is at least reasonable. Given the presence of the youthful narrator or artist in much of Reaney's work, the existence of such a one in this play is certainly consistent with what else the poet has written. In the early dramatic works there is "a sensitive, esthetic youth . . .reluctant or unable until the end to give up his childish fantasies and embrace the ambiguities and difficulties of the adult world."¹² Eli in The Killdeer, Kenneth in The Easter Egg, and Andrew in The Sun and the Moon all learn to accept the reality surrounding them with the assistance of real or substitute loving parents. Indeed, their search for a spiritual source is recognized by the Reverend Kingbird: "All our life we seek our real parents / Those who can beget and bear our souls."¹³ Moreover, Eli clearly recognizes this: "If only we could choose our mothers and fathers."¹⁴ In each of these three early plays, the "real parents" are revealed as vital, loving human beings: Harry and Rebecca, Polly and Ira, Kingbird and Susan. Redemption is achieved by each "esthetic youth" in the real world. This is a clear departure

from the youthful poet-persona in The Red Heart where the only release lies in a realm of fantasy or in death.

In that early work the adult world is one of "blindness and malevolence".¹⁵ The reminiscing adult in "The School Globe" (Poems, pp. 63-64) defines the difference between the world of the child and that of the adult:

But if someone in authority
 Were here, I'd say
 Give me this old world back
 Whose husk I clasp
 And I'll give you in exchange
 The great sad real one
 That's filled
 Not with a child's remembered and pleasant skies
 But with blood, pus, horror, death, stepmothers, and lies.
 (ll. 40-48)

This is some reality to be reckoned with. It would not seem to be appropriate that in a world of "horror" and "death" some kind of realization would make the falling away of youthful "pleasant skies" desirable. That is not to say that the world of the child is all innocence. For even in "Clouds" (Poems, p. 52), where "clouds are soft fat horses / That draw Weather in his wagon" (ll. 1-2), where the whip is lightning and the hooves "water that stamp / Upon the roof during a storm" (ll. 6-7), the narrator recognizes that these clouds are also destructive, the hooves wearing down the earth and their manes pushing ships "into the sea". And yet the concept is entirely metaphorical. The confrontation between the beauty and productivity of nature and the malevolent forces contained in it exists entirely within the

imagination. Rather than the real adult world being a source of hope for the child-poet, it is the world of the imagination which will free him from the evil which he recognizes as surrounding him.

Reaney arranges the titles of his plays this way: "Three Desks, Killdeer, Easter Egg, Sun and Moon . . . and . . . Listen to the Wind, Colours in the Dark, Names and Nicknames, One Man Masque, Geography Match, Donnelly, the Genesis I've been talking about".¹⁶ Clearly, then, Listen to the Wind is placed in a separate grouping apart from the three early plays we have been discussing. He tells us that when he first began to write plays he "was out to tell as strong a story as I could devise, as richly as possible."¹⁷ With Listen to the Wind comes a change. The story is easily as important as in his early plays. Indeed, he chooses to base his story on Rider Haggard's Dawn "because the patterns in it are not only sensational but deadly accurate".¹⁸ Moreover, the imaginative process becomes integrated into the patterns. The imagination as observed in the actions of the "kids" and Malcolm on the skateboard leads Reaney to experiment with the possibility of integrating the "instinct just to 'have fun' -- to make a pattern simply because like a whooping crane we can't help doing a spring dance with our bodies."¹⁹ What we then have is a synthesis of story and imagination. But more than that, it is a synthesis of the

two apparently antithetical resolutions for the child-poet as he confronts the real world in The Red Heart, on the one hand, and in the three early plays, on the other. The emerging artist in the early plays seeks and finds real, loving parents in the adult world and so can come to grips with adulthood, and with the good and evil contained in it. The poet of The Red Heart finds the imagination to be the only source of reality or at least the most acceptable one, and so deals with the world on that basis.

In paralleling Owen with the emerging artist in both the early plays and The Red Heart we have found that his concerns are both those of the imagination and of a search for his "real parents". We remember his appeal to his parents as he recovers from his "fit":

Mother and Father. It is time that you are together again. I felt you both touching me -- like rain. I'm not very old yet, you know. I still want to be held. If you keep on letting go of me -- I'll slip away.

(Scene 41, p. 88)

His identity, even his life, depends upon the presence of real, loving parents. In order to keep his mother in the family group he decides to put on a play:

JENNY:

Do you miss your ma much?

OWEN: nodding

I was thinking -- if we put on something -- she might come back -- to see it.

HARRIET:

Where is she?

OWEN:

Just over at his place -- over there. You see --
he'll take her away in the fall. And -- I want to
see her again. Mother loves plays.

(Scene 1, p. 14)

The play, however, is not only a ploy to bring Mrs. Taylor to the farm so that Owen can see her once again before she leaves. As Owen conceives it, it is an alternate route to accepting the reality of the adult world which in this family, for Mrs. Taylor, is comprised of "sickness and death". (Scene 47, p. 108) That, too, is the reality which the poet-persona of The Red Heart sees.

Interestingly, the story, or perhaps more correctly, the pattern of the story in its adaptation by the child-poet Owen, is emphatically focussed on the malevolent adult world. As in The Red Heart, so in this play "the whole adult world comes off very badly".²⁰ Listen to the Wind follows the essential plot line of Haggard's novel fairly closely. The patterns hinted at in Dawn,²¹ however, are amplified and more fully conceived in the Reaney work. With the exception of Angela and Arthur all names have been changed. This is an innovation which is derived from Emily Brontë's Gondal poems and will be dealt with later. Much of the dialogue contained in the inner play is directly derived from the Haggard novel. The unfolding of three letters earlier discussed provides an excellent example. We remember that Geraldine unfolds Claudia's letter to Piers telling him that

she will meet him in the summer house. Following that meeting, of course, they are married. Having read Claudia's note, Geraldine guesses the truth and dictates the following to Douglas:

A sincere friend warns Mrs. Piers Caresfoot that while she lives lonely in the great city elsewhere, her husband is deceiving her, and has become entangled with a young lady of her acquaintance. Burn this wait and watch exclamation mark!

(Scene 16, p. 39).

The revelation of the secret marriage is unfolded another way in Haggard's novel. Douglas's counterpart, George, is in London on business and happens to spot Hilda (Claudia) on the street. He follows her to her lodgings, inspects an adjoining apartment, elicits as much information as possible about Hilda from the landlady and then checks at the local registry office where he obtains a copy of the marriage certificate of Hilda and Philip (Piers). He quickly writes Lady Bellamy (Eldred) about the newly discovered information. That same evening Hilda receives an anonymous letter, "written in a round clerk's hand, that had been posted in the City." (p. 50) The implication is, of course, that Douglas wrote the letter with no assistance from Lady Bellamy. The letter reads: "A sincere friend warns Mrs. Philip Caresfoot that her husband is deceiving her and has become entangled with a young lady of her acquaintance. Burn this; wait and watch!" (p. 50). Except for the interpolation of "while she lives lonely in the great city else-

where", the note in the play is verbatim the note in Dawn. That addition is important for Reaney's work, as previously discussed, for it relates to the preceding song of the chorus.

It is specifically indicated that George writes the next letter. That this should be done is determined in the following manner:

"Well," said George to Mrs. Bellamy, as they drove home together after the great dinner party (do not be shocked, my reader, Bellamy was on the box), "well, how shall we strike? Shall I go to the old man to-morrow, and show him my certified copy? There is no time to lose. He might die any day."

"No; we must act through Mrs. Philip."

"Why?"

"It is more scientific, and it will be more amusing."

"Poor thing! it will be a blow to her. Don't you like her?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because she did not trust me, and because she eclipses me. Therefore I am glad of an opportunity of destroying her."

"You are a very ruthless woman."

"When I have an end in view, I march straight to it; I do not vacillate -- that is all. But never mind me; here we are near home. Go to town by the first train to-morrow morning and post another letter announcing what has happened here. Then come back and wait."

(pp. 50-51)

In this sequence, Lady Bellamy is clearly the villain while George demonstrates a degree of compassion. Nevertheless he carries out Lady Bellamy's instructions. Of course, it must be remembered that he very ruthlessly investigated Hilda's residence, he obtained the marriage certificate and

he initiates the plan to destroy Philip. Moreover, it was he who wrote the first letter. George seems to fulfill the role of the wronged youth who approaches adulthood with vengeance, and yet he is not completely black. Redeeming qualities are visible. The following is the parallel passage in

Listen to the Wind:

DOUGLAS:

Well, how shall we strike? I've got a copy of the marriage certificate. There's no time to lose. He might die any day.

GERALDINE:

No. We must act through her -- Mrs. Piers -- Claudia.

DOUGLAS:

Why?

GERALDINE:

It is more scientific and it will be more amusing.

DOUGLAS:

Don't you like her?

GERALDINE:

Once she left a room because I was in it. So I am glad now to have the chance to destroy her.

DOUGLAS:

She's heavy with child.

GERALDINE:

Douglas, go to town tomorrow morning and post this letter.

(Scene 18, p. 41)

Although the adaptation is very close to the original passage, there are particular reasons for changes. Douglas and Geraldine are equally guilty in the plot. There are no indications that Douglas will shrink from the use of Claudia.

His statement pointing out her pregnancy does not clear or exonerate him. It does nothing more than point out her condition. However, it does juxtapose life with death as we are initially reminded of Devil's impending death and then quickly learn of an imminent birth. Moreover, in destroying Claudia Geraldine could destroy the child as she had her own, the child, we remember, that was fathered by Douglas. Note too that Geraldine writes the letter this time and we learn the contents of that letter, something not clearly defined in the novel.

But the important aspect of this adaptation is that it shows the selectivity of the artist, more specifically, the selectivity of a dramatist. Where the passage from the novel is long and convoluted, the dramatic passage is tightly structured, quickly paced, and gives the audience required information only. Douglas's first speech, four short sentences in quick succession, gives the audience all that is necessary. The symbiotic relationship between Geraldine and Douglas is firmly established as they begin their malevolent plotting together. We need no narrator's interjection to remind us of the strangeness of the relationship. Neither does Reaney want us to see any misgivings on Douglas's part. He must fulfill his role as the black huntsman, or, as a parallel to Archimago, as the black king. Similarly, Geraldine is clearly defined as the black

queen. She does not use Haggard's gentle speech: "because she eclipses me. Therefore I am glad of an opportunity of destroying her." Rather, her lines are very active with no subtleties about them. We are reminded of a former occasion, a visual sequence in the play when Claudia "left a room because I was in it":

A bow and curtsey, but Mrs. Eldred (Geraldine) is abstracted. She has been engaged in a staring match with Claudia who with a grimace of dislike leaves the room and walks into the garden.

(Stage Directions, Scene 11, p. 33)

There is no vague eclipsing here. Reaney is well aware of the power of vision in theatre.

That is not to say that he finds verbal allusions weak. We remember that this play is being directed by verbal patterns expressing the power of the wind and, indeed, this passage of dialogue contains the direct allusion to "The orchard bough is heavy ripe" in Douglas's "She's heavy with child." Reaney is not simply a poet. He is a poet-dramatist and to be so he must integrate action with word. We do not need to hear Geraldine say "When I have an end in view, I march straight to it; I do not vacillate", for we see this in her actions. Her final speech in this scene, in its authority and commanding tone, reveals her for what she is. Poetic and dramatic ironies are at work here.

There is another instance of this very full quality in Reaney's work. Angela and Arthur, having received the

terms of their engagement from Piers, walk to the station together. The following sequence occurs:

ARTHUR:

Do you hear music?

ANGELA:

I've been hearing it for some time. Look, Arthur, it's an old beggar fiddling under the trees at the edge of the common.

Towards them as if they are walking towards him comes a disreputable but vaguely gentlemanly violinist. They put some money in his case and dance to his music. When the piece is finished he slouches off.

ARTHUR:

He's going into the tavern to spend the money I gave him.

ANGELA:

Poor fellow.

(Scene 34, pp. 74-75)

This is directly derived from Dawn (pp. 135-36). But where Haggard uses it to show Arthur's knowledge and appreciation of classical music, and further to allow Arthur to induce Angela to demonstrate the same technical virtuosity with words that the violinist shows with music, -- that is, to give the reader yet another example of the many excellences of the hero and heroine -- Reaney uses the episode as an experience in sight and sound. Again, the dramatist adapts, and does so by imposing his own sense of form on the source.

In addition to borrowing words, Reaney integrates very fundamental elements of the drama, music and dance, into his work. As a visual spectacle it would be pleasing to the audience. In mythic terms, it would seem to be a

visual re-enactment of the spring dance by young people around the May tree, for it does take place "under the trees". An engagement having taken place, a wish for the fertilizing spirit would seem to be appropriate. Indeed, the dramatic convention of the romance ending in a dance seems to be utilized here. But this is a curious place for such a dance to be occurring, for Owen in the preceding scene has decided that Angela will die in the end. His is still a tragic vision. The boy-artist cannot yet step beyond the confines of an actual development that seems to be pre-ordained. He cannot take the creative step into another world where life and death are meaningless. His crippled view is reflected in the image of the violinist. He is almost an absurd figure, in the manner of Beckett's Vladimir and Estragon. Where the two characters wear bowler hats and shabby but gentlemanly clothes, this man is described as "a disreputable but vaguely gentlemanly violinist." Where Estragon, the poet, cannot move beyond the confines of the existence apparently pre-ordained by Godot, this artist can do nothing more constructive with his art than use it to earn money to spend at the local tavern. The violinist lives in and is part of the ugly adult world which the poet-persona of The Red Heart and Owen, at this stage at least, see as inevitable. The future for Owen contains a malignancy which apparently cannot be escaped.

Haggard can never clearly define his villains as we have seen Reaney do, through image patterns and action (Scene 35). We have seen that even Haggard's George appears to have some redeeming qualities about him. His Lady Bellamy too is conceived of as possessing some goodness. She has no hand in the deaths of George and Philip and, moreover, does not kill her child. She abandons her first husband and child and they both ultimately die, but she does not cause their deaths, physically at least. She is identified by Arthur as an "Egyptian sorceress" (p. 113), by Angela as "an ideal of the Spirit of Power" (p. 113), and by herself as irretrievably wicked: "My life has been evil, my sins many." (p. 313) But in the depths of her being rests some goodness. Indeed, she tells Angela how to contact Arthur. But more than that, she is given clear directions as to how to achieve full redemption:

"Your voice," she said, "has a music that awakes the echoes from a time when I was good and pure like you, but that time has gone for ever."

"Surely, Lady Bellamy, the heart that can remember it can also strive to reach another like it"

.
 "Whilst there is life there is hope; and, as I once heard Mr. Fraser say, the real key to forgiveness is the desire to be forgiven."

Again Lady Bellamy shut her eyes and thought, and, when she drew up their heavy lids, Angela saw that there was something of a peaceful look about them.
 (pp. 350-351)

Her past experience included a time when she was "good and pure". In admitting that she is a sinner ("my sins many") she is in a position to repent and achieve redemption through

the gift of mercy. The philosophical framework behind Haggard's Dawn is very much a Christian one in its fullest doctrinal sense. Of course, it must be realized that part of this stems from the fact that his reading audience expected such a point of view. For many of them it would be assumed that evil can be overcome by Christian charity.

Angela in Dawn is not an "angel messenger" in the sense of being a figure from another world, as we have previously seen that she is in Listen to the Wind. She is much more a figure to be identified with Christ. We have seen how she forgives Lady Bellamy and leads her to the path of redemption. She is a woman totally without fear of death because she trusts in "the mercy of a Creator, whose mercy is as wide as the ocean" (p. 134). Heaven is an assured reality to her:

"And why," she said, "should I, who am immortal, fear a change that I know has no power to harm me, that can, on the contrary, only bring me nearer to the purpose of my being? Certainly I shrink from death itself, as we all must, but of the dangers beyond I have no fear. Pleasant as this world is at times, there is something in us all that strives to rise above it, and, if I knew that I must die within this hour, I believe that I could meet my fate without a qualm. I am sure that when our trembling hands have drawn the veil from Death, we shall find His features, passionless indeed, but very beautiful."

(p. 134)

She is the true Christian to whom the Kingdom of God is a reality. In death she will look up and lift up her head,

because her "redemption draweth nigh" (St. Luke, 21:28). Good and evil on earth, although actual enough, can be transcended in the vision of life everlasting to come in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is this immortal figure that Philip fails to protect.

As in the play he may or may not have caused his father's death. In any case, he does not give him the medicine. There is certainly darkness surrounding such a son. But more than that he betrays his daughter and has a clear hand in the marriage to George. He accepts money in order that Lady Bellamy and George may carry out their plans. In this action he is very clearly the Judas figure and deserves the ravings of the mad Angela: "He cannot catch me now -- ha, ha, ha,! Nor you, Judas, who sold me. Judas! Judas! Judas!" (p. 304). He will surely suffer the curse which Hilda decrees:

"May the power of God be about you to protect you, my motherless babe, may angels guard you, and make you as they are; and may the heavy curse and everlasting doom of the Almighty fall upon those who bring evil upon you."

She paused, and then addressed her husband.

"Philip, you have heard my words; in your charge I leave the child, see that you never betray my trust."

(p. 68)

Judas Iscariot betrayed the trust of Christ and "purchased a field with the reward of that iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." (Acts of the Apostles, 1:18) Judas, in

his betrayal, falls headlong into hell in the bowels of the earth. Philip betrays the trust of his child, a child of heaven, so that he too, can purchase land. In so doing "everlasting doom of the Almighty" falls upon him. He is forever haunted by the world below:

Philip's ghastly gaze again fixed itself on the chair, and his teeth began to chatter.

"Great God," he said, "it is coming."

And uttering a smothered cry, he fell on his face in a half faint.

(p. 346)

Indeed, his only escape, too, is to fall to the earth. Piers as a Judas figure, then, is carried into Reaney's work.

Although Haggard clearly defines Philip according to this New Testament figure, he also takes care to make him a country gentleman as well. His business dealings are of a reputable nature. After losing the Caresfoot property to George, he acquires a fortune by intelligent investment in stocks and securities. He is never associated with animals and never scourges the countryside for stray dogs as Piers does. His tastes are those of a gentleman and when he meets Arthur his comment to Angela reveals him as such: "It really is a relief to speak to a gentleman again." (p. 100) There is no such quality about Piers as the selective artist makes his adaptations to suit his needs.

The patterns that Reaney chooses for his story are those of the adult world in The Red Heart, the "blood, pus,

horror, death, stepmothers, and lies." He is interested in the sorcery and malevolence found in Lady Bellamy, not her redemption. He chooses to view Philip as a Judas figure rather than a gentleman. He sees George as torn by lust.

Haggard gives him this clue:

Thus when he [Love] visits such a one as George Caresfoot, it is a potent fiend, whose mission is to enter through man's lower nature, to torture and destroy

(p. 206).

Moreover Haggard even sees George as a hunter who wields a whip: "'Swish!' went the heavy whip through the air, and fell on her fair cheek." (p. 302) Reaney focusses on these characteristics rather than presenting a man capable of compassion of any kind, however limited. Neither does he accept the Christian framework which redeems Lady Bellamy, damns Philip and protects Angela from destruction. Angela is certainly a heavenly creature in Reaney's work, but she is not by any means an angel carrying with her convenient doctrine.

In Haggard, Reaney finds "sensational" and "deadly accurate" patterns. Dawn, however dogmatically, deals with the "sources of being", the juxtaposition of good and evil and of life and death. Although Haggard's story is pretty fabulous, he tends as much as possible to assert low mimetic realism into it. His hero and heroine conquer all through love, but that love is very firmly entrenched in

a Christian ideological framework. Reaney in no way assimilates some kind of ideology into his work. He remains an objective artist. He makes little effort to confront his audience with "realistic drama". Rather, his work takes on mythic proportions. Indeed, I suggest that what we have here is a romance. Northrop Frye reminds us "that in all romances there is a tendency to set an idealized or noble situation over against an evil or demonic parody of it."²² The idealized love of Arthur and Angela is surely parodied in the relationship of Douglas and Geraldine. But more than that, the mythic qualities which are so obviously associated with the heroine and opposing forces, that is, Angela as the Artemis figure, Geraldine as a Hecate figure, Douglas as the demonic huntsman and Piers as Actaeon, are what show this play to be in the romance mode. "The enemy may be an ordinary human being, but the nearer the romance is to myth, the more attributes of divinity will cling to the hero and the more the enemy will take on demonic mythical qualitiesThe enemy is associated with winter, darkness, confusion, sterility, moribund life, and old age, and the hero with spring, dawn, order, fertility, vigor, and youth."²³ Indeed, the birth of Angela is described as a "Dawn" (Scene 21, p. 46) and, of course, Geraldine is the Lady of Darkness. But this is a heroine, not a hero. The hero emerges as we examine the Brontë motif and we will find

how it is that Reaney imposes his own particular "sense of form" on the romantic convention of the hero.

Where in Dawn, Angela can in life regain her lost love, Arthur, because of her essential Christian goodness, she achieves perfect love on earth in Listen to the Wind because of the power of the imagination. We remember that the action of the "story" is framed by four children, previously identified as associated with the four Brontë children. Muriel Spark comments on the childhood of the Brontës particularly in regard to the many words that have been written about their lack of maternal love following the death of their mother and the arrival of "Aunt Branwell":

So long as they obeyed what household rules she laid down; so long as they attended to religious devotions; so long as they appeared healthy, Aunt Branwell did not interfere with them -- their inner lives were their own to order as they pleased. Rarely were early-Victorian children allowed such liberty of thought and activity as were the Brontës. Paradoxically, there is every possibility that had their mother lived she would have humanized them to the extent of reducing their creative powers; while their personal sufferings might have been mitigated, their genius might in some measure have been muffled by her love.²⁴

Owen, Harriet, Ann and Jenny are together for a summer under the supervision of the feckless Mr. Taylor who gives them unbounded freedom to do whatever they like. Indeed, the "West Room" becomes a place where they order "their inner lives", develop their imaginative powers in whatever way they desire. Like the four Brontës (with the exception,

perhaps, of Jenny), parental deprivation leads them to spend their time together. Three of the four children are attempting to come to grips with the projected loss of a mother. Harriet reveals that her mother ran "away on him [her father].. She can't stand grandmother. She's working up at the orphanage. But back together in the fall I expect." (Scene 1, p. 13) Ann's mother "lost the baby, poor little dear. She's very ill. We've all been packed off." (Scene 1, p. 13) And of course, we are well aware of Owen's predicament: "Mother's run off on dad, I'm afraid. She simply rode off and said she couldn't stand us any longer." (Scene 1, p. 14) Given normal parental affection the play might not have been put on, nor would the particular source have been chosen, for the parts played by the three girls are intimately connected with their parental situations.

Harriet, who is at the moment without a mother, plays Angela later: Angela who lacks a living mother and who loves Arthur, played by Owen. Owen too, is missing his mother as Arthur's is dead. But, more interesting, is the fact that Owen and Harriet carry the seeds of affection for each other that Angela and Arthur bring to fruition. Harriet reveals that she has always believed that when they grew up, she and Owen would get married (Scene 28, p. 67). Ann, whose mother may be dying in childbirth, plays Claudia who does die in childbirth. Moreover, being directly

confronted with life and death in her real life, she has "to write up the death scene." (Scene 32, p. 71) And Jenny who is as "together as can be" (Scene 1, p. 14), plays Maria, the one person, outside of Angela, who makes a successful marriage and, moreover, gives birth to the hero. It would seem, then, that as the Brontës realized their creative powers because of the lack of maternal affection, these children find themselves resolving their real life problems in creativity.

A fragment from the diary of Emily and Ann shows this same kind of assimilation of real and imaginary worlds:

This morning Branwell went down to Mr. Driver's and brought news that Sir Robert Peel was going to be invited to stand for Leeds. Anne and I have been peeling apples for Charlotte to make apple pudding and for Aunt's . . . Charlotte said she made puddings perfectly and she . . . of a quick but limited intellect. Taby said just now Come Anne pilloputate (i.e. pill a potato). Aunt has come into the kitchen just now and said Where are your feet Anne. Anne answered On the floor Aunt. Papa opened the parlour door and gave Branwell a letter saying Here Branwell read this and show it to your Aunt and Charlotte. The Gondals are discovering the interior of Gaaldine. Sally Mosley is washing in the back kitchen.²⁵

Events of daily living are suddenly interjected by the latest event in the Gondal story. That dispensed with, the girls return to describing their every-day existence. But, not only is Gondal very much a part of the lives of Emily and Anne Brontë. That imaginary world is part of the world which Owen, Harriet, Ann and Jenny create. We have already

observed that several of Emily's Gondal poems serve as creative forces in assisting the "dreamers" in Listen to the Wind. What we discover further is that many of the names of characters of the inner play are not derived from Haggard's work, but rather come from the Gondal Story.

Fannie Ratchford describes that world: "in Emily's Gondal sin was real, paid for with Old Testament certainty in fixed wages of suffering -- real suffering -- and death. And Emily admitted no arbitrary force for good or evil; her Gondals were free moral agents following their own wills in accordance with circumstances."²⁶ If we remember, Rider Haggard's work operates on New Testament principles of redemption and mercy. In Reaney's version, the evil are evil and are all punished with death. Furthermore, the villains, at least, do follow their own wills. This could, of course, be Reaney's own innovative melodramatic convention, functioning outside of the traditional Christian ethic. In his convention it is the imagination which determines justice rather than some culturally imposed philosophy. However, I think it interesting that real suffering is a primary consideration in this work. Indeed, it is a struggle between life and death, the outcome not to be changed as whimsically as Charlotte and Branwell would have it.²⁷

Augusta Geraldine Almeda is heroine of the Gondal

poems. She is described as "a beautiful and richly endowed queen, a generous, joy-giving girl, hardening through indulgence of her ardent nature into a selfish, cruel woman ruthlessly feeding her vanity on the souls of men."²⁸

Lady Eldred is certainly beautiful and is a queen, albeit the Queen of Darkness. She is, too, a cruel and ruthless woman. She ultimately destroys both Piers and Douglas.

The Geraldine of Emily's poems has a child by the man she loves and although she does not kill it, she does watch it freeze to death.²⁹ Although the above pattern does seem

to correspond to some extent at least with Reaney's

Geraldine, we come to some difficulty when we attempt to explain the derivation of her married surname in the play.

It again is derived from Emily's work, but seems to have

little connection with the play. Lord Eldred is the captain of the guard who laments the loss of Queen Augusta after

she is murdered. That is certainly not the position of Sir

Eldred in the play. His is a cry for revenge. (Scene 43,

p. 93). The name might indeed be explained as Professor Lee

suggests: "Her name 'Eldred' presumably means 'fear of God,'

or perhaps 'scourge of God,' in keeping with her symbolic

function of antithesis to the 'heavenly messenger,'

Angela."³⁰ It is, then, a very fitting name.

Douglas is probably derived from the "darkly unhappy Douglas, a wronged youth grown into an embittered, conscience-

tortured murderer."³¹ It is he who ultimately kills Geraldine in Emily's work and, indeed, her love for him in the play kills all goodness in her. Julius Brenzaida becomes the emperor of three kingdoms³² and so provides a suitable surname for Reaney's hero. Tabby and Martha are obviously associated with the real life maids of the Brontës, the dog, Keeper, was the name of their dog. Julia Elbe, Rogue, Gleneden and perhaps Claudia are probably derived from Brontë works³³ although not with the obvious connections that Douglas and Geraldine provide. But what is really important about the inclusion of the Brontëesque names in the play is that they provide the flavour and, moreover, indicate the germ of the idea which probably moved this work to fruition.

If Twelfth Night can evolve from thoughts about a clown and a drum, Listen to the Wind can begin with reflections about the intriguing, imaginative Brontë children. If their created worlds are as real to them as the real one, then in dramatic form you have a simultaneous play and one within it working. If, moreover, the imaginative world is a working out of or substitute for real world privation, then the inner play is intimately connected with the outer one. That being the case, the imagination becomes the primary concern. If you have an artist who sees art as built upon art and who conceives the playing of life on death

as the key to true imaginative perception, he then must find patterns that operate around this principle. If he finds poetry which amplifies such a pattern in a story, then he can begin to develop a work. If he understands the principles of theatre as a synthesis of sight and sound and of action and words, he may even be able to create a work which will unfold the imaginative process to an audience and perhaps even teach them how to participate actively.

As with most modern dramatists, Reaney's concern is to return "the audiences's loss of imaginative power." To do this dramatists like Grotowski have attempted to revive ritualistic realism or, like Beckett, to present one single poetic metaphor as a total dramatic work. Reaney is not unaware of modern experiments in theatre:

We've had theatre of cruelty (the rebirth of tragedy -- the imitation of our deathwish); we've had the theatre of the absurd (the rebirth of comedy -- the imitation of bitter laughter); we've had the theatre of detachment (the rebirth of the miracle play -- Mother Courage drags her cross).

(Production notes, 1966)

But it is curious that in their desire to make the drama once again an important art form, dramatists have forgotten about the one essential aspect of art. Art is not real in the sense of being actual life. This is so even though the tendency in theatre ever since Jonson's comedies, comedies which he designed to be as plausible as possible and to give as much semblance of realism as possible, has

been towards realistic drama. Shakespeare, universally acknowledged to be the greatest of all dramatists, consistently confronts his audience with illusions. His art is art. It is not actuality and is never claimed to be so, despite the tendency of Romantic critics like Bradley to discuss Shakespeare characters as actual people with existences outside the plays. The artist creates whatever he wants to create, using his own or literature's own laws as guides, not the laws of the actual world. His is the world of the imagination.

The good and evil dichotomy found in Dawn, the fundamental struggle with life and death which confronts every man, provides the pattern of the story in Listen to the Wind. The total assimilation of the real and imaginary worlds found in the lives of the Brontë children provides the pattern of the inner and outer plays. As they confronted the problem of "the sources of being" in their childhood works, Owen can confront his real life struggle in his play. It was earlier suggested that Reaney provides the outer play framework as a helpful hint to the audience who must be taught to "dream it out". He begins to teach his audience to imagine by first allowing them to identify with the child's imaginative process. Owen is the leader among the children, and it is he who is the hero of Reaney's romance.

"The perennially child-like quality of romance is marked by its extraordinarily persistent nostalgia, its search for some kind of imaginative golden age in time or space."³⁴ This, the romance quest, is the primary one in Listen to the Wind. It contains "the passage from struggle through a point of ritual death to a recognition scene".³⁵ Owen struggles with the actual world and projects the struggle into his drama. He at one point comes very near to dying and, momentarily at least, there seems to be a question as to whether or not he will be allowed to "put on the play". Both he and his art are at the point of extinction. But he is allowed to continue and eventually finds himself "free -- in Eternity".

In reviving archetypal romance, Reaney revives the imagination. Instead of using myth and ritual as a confrontation with reality as Grotowski does, or poetry as ideology as Brecht does, or metaphor as the play as the absurdists do he combines all these elements into one dramatic construct and reveals the power of the imagination, its real ability to transcend time and space. The wish fulfillment dream reasserts its validity before a participating, imagining audience. The ritual dance at the end of his romance once again appears under the protection of "the giant shadows of the four genii" (Stage Directions, Scene 49, p. 113), that is, the genii who protected the worlds of the young, naïve

Brontës. Beginning with their naïveté as the initial seed of an idea, Reaney emerges as Ionesco's "great naïve poet". "Reality is what is created by human desire, as the arts are created."³⁶

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER THREE

¹Luigi Pirandello, "Spoken Action", trans. Fabrizio Melano, in Eric Bentley, ed., The Theory of the Modern Stage (London: Penguin, 1968), p. 155.

²"Ten Years at Play", p. 72.

³"Spoken Action", p. 154.

⁴Jerzy Grotowski, "Towards a Poor Theatre", trans. T. K. Wiewiorowski, in Towards a Poor Theatre (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), p. 15.

⁵Jerzy Grotowski, "The Theatre's New Testament", trans. Jürgen Anderson and Judy Barba, in Towards a Poor Theatre, p. 49.

⁶Jerzy Grotowski, "Statement of Principles", trans. Maja Buszewicz and Judy Barba, in Towards a Poor Theatre, p. 257.

⁷E. Gordon Craig, "The Art of the Theatre the First Dialogue", in The Theory of the Modern Stage, p. 115.

⁸Robert W. Corrigan, "Introduction: The Theatre in Search of a Fix", in Robert Corrigan, ed., Theatre in the Twentieth Century (New York: Grove, 1963), p. 23.

⁹Martin Esslin, Brief Chronicles (London: Temple Smith, 1970), p. 222.

¹⁰Eugene Ionesco, "Discovering the Theatre", trans. Leonard C. Pronko, in Theatre in the Twentieth Century, p. 83.

¹¹Christopher Fry, "Comedy" in Theatre in the Twentieth Century, p. 113.

¹²Alvin Lee, James Reaney, p. 136.

¹³James Reaney, The Sun and the Moon, in The Killdeer and Other Plays (Toronto: MacMillan, 1962), p. 163.

¹⁴James Reaney, The Killdeer, in The Killdeer and Other Plays, p. 73.

¹⁵Alvin Lee, James Reaney, p. 29.

¹⁶"Ten Years at Play", p. 75.

¹⁷"Ten Years at Play", p. 70.

¹⁸Production Notes, 1966, p. 117.

¹⁹Production Notes, 1966, p. 117.

²⁰Alvin Lee, James Reaney, p. 27.

²¹H. Rider Haggard, Dawn (London: Spencer Blackett). All quotations are from this edition and will be acknowledged by page number within the text.

²²Northrop Frye, A Natural Perspective (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 110.

²³Anatomy of Criticism, pp. 187-188.

²⁴Muriel Spark, ed., The Brontë Letters (London: Macmillan, 1966), p. 16.

²⁵Emily and Anne Brontë, an excerpt from their diary, Nov. 24, 1834, in The Bronte Letters, p. 17.

²⁶Ratchford, p. 102.

²⁷Ratchford, p. 102. Branwell was notorious for reviving dead members of his company at will.

²⁸Ratchford, p. 102.

²⁹Ratchford, p. 137.

³⁰ Alvin Lee, James Reaney, p. 152.

³¹ Ratchford, p. 102.

³² Ratchford, pp. 136-37.

³³ Elbe comes from Alexander, Lord of Elbë. Gleneden seems to be a conspirator for Julius Brenzaida's death. Probably the connection is with Eden, for Reaney. Gleneden is the local parson and teaches the "angel messenger" Angela. Claudia may be derived from Emily's poem #102 where a woman laments her separation from her homeland. She remains in England. Rogue seems to come from Charlotte's work where he is conceived of as a pirate. See Ratchford, pp. 59-60, 251-58.

³⁴ Anatomy of Criticism, p. 186.

³⁵ Anatomy of Criticism, p. 187.

³⁶ A Natural Perspective, p. 115.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

- Brontë, Charlotte. The Complete Poems of Charlotte Brontë. Edited by Clement Shorter; bibliography and notes by C. W. Hatfield. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923.
- Brontë, Charlotte, Emily and Ann. Poems. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1902.
- Brontë, Emily. The Complete Poems of Emily Jane Brontë. Edited by Clement Shorter; arranged and collected with bibliography and notes by C. W. Hatfield. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923.
- Haggard, H. Rider. Dawn. London: Spencer Blackett, *n.d.*
- Reaney, James. Colours in the Dark. Vancouver: talonbooks, 1971.
- . Donnelly. Unpublished manuscript of forthcoming play. Received June, 1973.
- . The Killdeer and Other Plays. Toronto: MacMillan, 1962.
- . Listen to the Wind. Vancouver: talonbooks, 1972.
- . Masks of Childhood. Edited by Brian Parker. Toronto: New Press, 1972.
- . Poems. Edited by Germaine Warkentin. Toronto: New Press, 1972.
- . The Red Heart. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1949.
- . A Suit of Nettles. Toronto: MacMillan, 1958.

Secondary Materials

- Atwood, Margaret. "Rider Haggard's Superwoman", Alphabet, 10 (July 1965), pp. 65-82.
- , Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature. Toronto: Anansi, 1972.
- Bacon, Francis. Francis Bacon: A Selection of His Works. Edited by Sidney Warhaft. Toronto: Macmillan, 1965.
- Bentley, Eric, ed. The Theory of the Modern Stage. London: Penguin, 1968.
- Brontë, Charlotte. Jane Eyre. Edited by Q. D. Leavis. London: Penguin, 1970.
- Brontë, Emily. Wuthering Heights. Edited by David Daiches. London: Penguin, 1971.
- Corrigan, Robert W., ed. Theatre in the Twentieth Century. New York: Grove Press, 1963.
- Darwin, Charles. The Structure and Distribution of Coral Reefs. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1842.
- Esslin, Martin. Brief Chronicles. London: Temple-Smith, 1970.
- , ed. Samuel Beckett: A Collection of Critical Essays. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965.
- , The Theatre of the Absurd. New York: Doubleday, 1961.
- Frazer, Sir James George. The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion. Abridged edition. London: Macmillan, 1963.
- Frye, Northrop. Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays. Princeton: University Press, 1971.
- , The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination. Toronto: Anansi, 1971.

- . The Educated Imagination. Toronto: Hunter-Rose, 1972.
- . A Natural Perspective: The Development of Shakespearean Comedy and Romance. New York: Columbia University Press, 1967.
- Gerin, Winifred. Branwell Brontë. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1961.
- Grotowski, Jerzy. Towards a Poor Theatre. Preface by Peter Brook. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968.
- Hamilton, Edith. Mythology. New York: Mentor, 1942.
- Jones, D. G. Butterfly on Rock: A Study of Themes and Images in Canadian Literature. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973.
- Jung, Carl G., ed. Man and His Symbols. New York: Dell, 1969.
- Jung, Carl G. Memories, Dreams, Reflections. Edited by Aniela Jaffé; translated by Richard and Clara Winston. New York: Vintage, 1963.
- Klinck, Carl F., ed., et al. Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.
- Lawrence, D. H. St. Mawr and the Man Who Died. New York: Vintage, 1953.
- Lee, Alvin A. James Reaney. New York: Twayne, 1968.
- Lewis, Allan. The Contemporary Theatre. New York: Crown, 1971.
- MacPherson, Jay. "Listen to the Wind", Canadian Forum, XLVI (September 1966), 136-137.
- Metcalf, John, ed. The Narrative Voice. Toronto: McGraw-Hill, Ryerson, 1972.
- Murphy, Rosalie, ed. Contemporary Poets of the English Language. Deputy editor James Vinson; preface by C. Day Lewis. London: St. James Press, 1970, pp. 901-902.

- New, William H., ed. Dramatists in Canada. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1972.
- Raby, Peter, ed. The Stratford Scene 1958-1968. Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., 1968.
- Ratchford, Fannie Elizabeth. The Brontë's Web of Childhood. New York: Russell and Russell, 1964.
- Reaney, James. "Editorial", Alphabet, 4 (June 1962), p. 3.
- . "An Evening of Babble and Doodle: Presentations of Poetry", Canadian Literature, XII (Spring 1962), 39.
- Ross, Sinclair. As For Me and My House. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941.
- Shakespeare, William. Othello. Edited by M. R. Ridley. London: Arden (Methuen), 1967.
- . The Tempest. Edited by Frank Kermode. 6th ed. London: Arden (Methuen), 1962.
- Smith, A. J. M. Masks of Poetry: Canadian Critics on Canadian Verse. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1962.
- Spark, Muriel, ed. The Brontë Letters. London: Macmillan, 1966.
- Spenser, Edmund. The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser. Edited by J. C. Smith and E. De Selincourt. 3 vols. London: Oxford, 1972.
- Stevens, Wallace. Poems. Selected with an introduction by Samuel French Morse. New York: Vintage, 1959.
- Sutherland, Ronald. Second Image: Comparative Studies in Québec / Canadian Literature. Toronto: New Press, 1971.
- Thomas, Dylan. Under Milkwood. Screenplay by Andrew Sinclair. London: J. M. Dent, 1972.
- Thoreau, Henry D. Walden. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1946.
- Woodman, Ross G. James Reaney. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1971.